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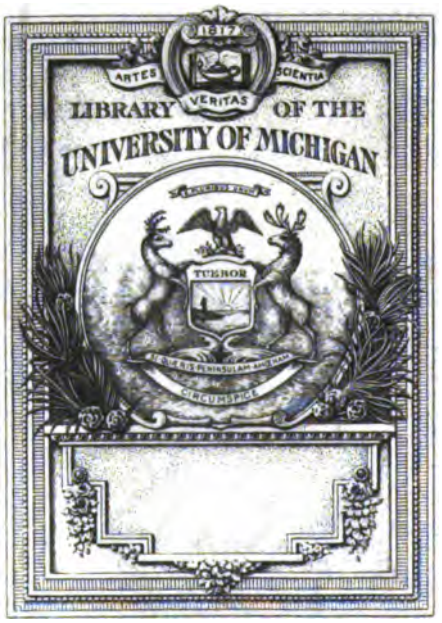
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WHAT I REMEMBER

VOL. II

WHAT I REMEMBER

BY

THOMAS ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

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WHAT I REMEMBER.

CHAPTER I.

No! as I said at the end of the last chapter but one, before I was led away by the circumstances of that time to give the world the benefit of my magnetic reminiscences—*valeat quantum!*—I was not yet bitten, despite Colley Grattan's urgings, with any temptation to attempt fiction, and "passion, me boy!" But I am surprised on turning over my old diaries to find how much I was writing, and planning to write, in those days, and not less surprised at the amount of running about which I accomplished.

My life in those years of the thirties must have been a very busy one. I find myself writing and sending off a surprising number of "articles" on all sorts of subjects—reviews, sketches of travel, biographical notices, fragments from the byeways of history, and the like, to all kinds of periodical publications, many of them long since dead and forgotten. That the world should have forgotten

all these articles "goes without saying." But what is not perhaps so common an incident in the career of a penman is, that *I* had in the majority of cases utterly forgotten them, and all about them, until they were recalled to mind by turning the yellow pages of my treasured but almost equally forgotten journals! I beg to observe, also, that all this pen-work was not only printed, but *paid for*. My motives were of a decidedly mercenary description. "*Hic scribit famâ ductus, at ille fame.*" I belonged emphatically to the latter category, and little indeed of my multifarious productions ever found its final resting place in the waste-paper basket. They were rejected often, but re-despatched a second and a third time, if necessary, to some other "organ," and eventually swallowed by some editor or other.

I am surprised, too, at the amount of locomotion which I contrived to combine with all this scribbling. I must have gone about, I think, like a tax-gatherer, with an inkstand slung to my button-hole! And in truth I was industrious; for I find myself in full swing of some journey, arriving at my inn tired at night, and finishing and sending off some article before I went to my bed. But it must have been only by means of the joint supplies contributed by all my editors that I could have found the means of paying all the stage-coaches, diligences, and steamboats which I find the record of my continually employing. "*Navibus atque Quadrigis petimus bene vivere!*" And I succeeded by their means in living, if not well, at least very pleasantly.

For I was born a rambler.

I heard just now a story of a little boy, who replied to the common question, "What he would like to be when he grew up?" by saying that he should like to be either a giant or a *retired* stock-broker! I find the qualifying adjective delicious, and admire the pronounced taste for repose indicated by either side of the alternative. But my propensities were more active, and in the days before I entered my teens I used always to reply to similar demands, that I would be a "king's messenger"! I knew no other life which approached so nearly to perpetual motion. "The road" was my paradise, and it is a true saying that the child is father to the man. The Shakespearian passage which earliest impressed my childish mind and carried with it my heartiest sympathies was the song of old Autolycus:

> "Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,
> And merrily hent the stile-a:
> Your merry heart goes all the day,
> Your sad tires in a mile-a."

Over how many miles of "foot-path way," under how many green hedges, has my childish treble chanted that enlivening ditty!

But that was in much earlier days to those I am now writing of.

During the years between my dreary time at Birmingham and my first departure for Italy, I find the record of many pedestrian or other rambles

in England and abroad. There they are, all recorded day by day—the qualities of the inns and the charges at them (not so much less than those of the present day as might be imagined, with the exception of the demands for beds), the beauty and specialties of the views, the talk of wayfaring companions, the careful measurements of the churches, the ever-recurring ascent of the towers of them, &c. &c.

Here and there in the mountains of chaff there may be a grain worth preserving, as where I read that at Haddon Hall the old lady who showed the house, and who boasted that her ancestors had been servitors of the possessors of it for more than three hundred years, pointed out to me the portrait of one of them, who had been "forester," hanging in the hall. She also pointed out the window from which a certain heiress had eloped, and by doing so had carried the hall and lands into the family of the present owners, and told me that Mrs. Radcliffe, shortly before the publication of her *Mysteries of Udolpho*, had visited Haddon, and had sat at that window busily writing for a long time.

I seem to have been an amateur of sermons in those days, from the constant records I find of sermons listened to, by no means always, or indeed generally, complimentary to the preachers. Here is an entry criticising, with young presumption, a sermon by Dr. Dibdin, whose bibliophile books, however, I had much taste for.

"I heard Dr. Dibdin preach. He preached with much gesticulation, emphasis, and grimace the most utterly trashy sermon I ever heard; words —words—words—without the shadow of an idea in them."

I remember, as if it were yesterday, a shrewd sort of an old lady, the mother, I think, of the curate of the parish, who heard me, as we were leaving the church, expressing my opinion of the doctor's discourse, saying, "Well, it is a very old story, young gentleman, and it is mighty difficult to find anything new to say about it!"

The bibliomaniacal doctor, however, seems to have pleased me better out of the pulpit than in it, for I find that "he called in the afternoon and chatted amusingly for an hour. He fell tooth and nail upon the Oxford Tracts men, and told us of a Mr. Wackerbarth, a curate in Essex, a Cambridge man, who, he says, elevates the host, crosses himself, and advocates burning of heretics. It seems to me, however," continues this censorious young diarist, "that those who object to the persecution, even to extermination of heretics, admit the uncertainty and dubiousness of all theological doctrine and belief. For if it be *certain* that God will punish disbelief in doctrines essential to salvation, and *certain* that any Church possesses the knowledge what those doctrines are, does it not follow that a man who goes about persuading people to reject those doctrines should be treated as we treat a mad dog loose in the streets of a city?" Thus

fools, when they are young enough, rush in where wise men fear to tread!

I had entirely forgotten, but find from my diary that it was our pleasant friend but indifferent preacher, Dr. Dibdin, who on the 11th of February, 1839, married my sister, Cecilia, to Mr., now Sir John, Tilley.

It appears that I was not incapable of appreciating a good sermon when I heard one, for I read of the impression produced upon me by an "admirable sermon preached by Mr. Smith" (it must have been Sydney, I take it) in the Temple Church. The preacher quoted largely from Jeremy Taylor, "giving the passages with an excellence of enunciation and expression which impressed them on my mind in a manner which will not allow me to forget them." Alack! I *have* forgotten every word of them!

I remember, however, perfectly well, without any reference to my diary, hearing—it must have been much about the same time—Sydney Smith preach a sermon at St. Paul's, which much impressed me. He took for his text, "Knowledge and wisdom shall be the stability of thy times" (I write from memory—the memory of half a century ago—but I think the words ran thus). Of course the gist of his discourse may be readily imagined. But the manner of the preacher remains more vividly present to my mind than his words. He spoke with extreme rapidity, and had the special gift of combining extreme rapidity of utterance with very

perfect clearness. His manner, I remember thinking, was unlike any that I had ever witnessed in the pulpit, and appeared to me to resemble rather that of a very earnest speaker at the hustings than the usual pulpit style. His sentences seemed to run downhill, with continually increasing speed till they came to a full stop at the bottom. It was, I think, the only sermon I ever heard which I wished longer. He carried me with him completely, for the century was in those days, like me, young. But if I were to hear a similarly fervid discourse now on the same subject, I should surely desire some clearer setting forth of the difference between "knowledge" and "wisdom."

It was about this time, *i.e.*, in the year 1839, that my mother, who had been led, by I forget what special circumstances, to take a great interest in the then hoped-for factory legislation, and in Lord Shaftesbury's efforts in that direction, determined to write a novel on the subject with the hope of doing something towards attracting the public mind to the question, and to visit Lancashire for the purpose of obtaining accurate information and local details.

The novel was written, published in the then newly-invented fashion of monthly numbers, and called *Michael Armstrong*. The publisher, Mr. Colburn, paid a long price for it, and did not complain of the result. But it never became one of the more popular among my mother's novels, sharing, I suppose, the fate of most novels written

for some purpose other than that of amusing their readers. Novel readers are exceedingly quick to smell the rhubarb under the jam in the dose offered to them, and set themselves against the undesired preachment, as obstinately as the naughtiest little boy who ever refused to be physicked with nastiness for his good.

My mother neglected no means of making the facts stated in her book authentic and accurate, and the *mise en scène* of her story graphic and truthful. Of course I was the companion of her journey, and was more or less useful to her in searching for and collecting facts in some places where it would have been difficult for her to look for them. We carried with us a number of introductions from Lord Shaftesbury to a rather strange assortment of persons, whom his lordship had found useful both as collectors of trustworthy information, and energetic agitators in favour of legislation.

The following letter from the Earl of Shaftesbury, then Lord Ashley, to my mother on the subject, is illustrative of the strong interest he took in the matter, and of the means which he thought necessary for obtaining information respecting it:

"MADAM,—The letters to Macclesfield and Manchester shall be sent by this evening's post. On your arrival at Macclesfield be so kind as to ask for Reuben Bullock, of Roe Street, and at Manchester for John Doherty, a small bookseller of Hyde's Cross in the town. They will show you

the secrets of the place, as they showed them to me.

"Mr. Wood himself is not now resident in Bradford, he is at present in Hampshire; but his partner, Mr. Walker, carries out all his plans with the utmost energy. I will write to him to-night. The firm is known by the name of 'Wood and Walker.' Mr. Wood is a person whom you may easily see in London on your return to town. With every good wish and prayer for your success,

"I remain your very obedient servant,

"ASHLEY.

"P.S.—The *Quarterly Review* of December, 1836, contains an article on the factory system, which would greatly assist by the references to the evidence before Committee, &c. &c."

It is useless here and now to say anything of the horrors of uncivilised savagery and hopeless abject misery which we witnessed. They are painted in my mother's book, and should any reader ever refer to those pages for a picture of the state of things among the factory hands at that time, he may take with him my testimony to the fact that there was no exaggeration in the outlines of the picture given. What we are there described to have seen, we saw.

And let doctrinaire economists preach as they will, and Radical socialists abuse a measure, which helps to take from them the fulcrum of the levers that are to upset the whole existing framework of

society, it is impossible for one who *did* see those sights, and who has visited the same localities in later days, not to bless Lord Shaftesbury's memory, ay, and the memory, if they have left any, of the humble assistants whose persistent efforts helped on the work.

But the little knot of apostles to whom Lord Shaftesbury's letters introduced us, and into whose intimate *conciliabules* his recommendations caused our admittance, was to my mother, and yet more to me, to whom the main social part of the business naturally fell, a singularly new and strange one. They were all, or nearly all of them, men a little raised above the position of the factory hands, to the righting of whose wrongs they devoted their lives. They had been at some period of their lives, in almost every case, factory workers themselves, but had by various circumstances, native talent, industry, and energy, or favouring fortune—more likely by all together—managed to raise themselves out of the slough of despond in which their fellows were overwhelmed. One, I remember, a Mr. Doherty, a very small bookseller, to whom we were specially recommended by Lord Shaftesbury. He was an Irishman, a Roman Catholic, and a furious Radical, but a *very* clever man. He was thoroughly acquainted with all that had been done, all that it was hoped to do, and with all the means that were being taken for the advancement of those hopes, over the entire district.

He came and dined with us at our hotel, but it

was, I remember, with much difficulty that we persuaded him to do so, and when at table his excitement in talking was so great and continuous that he could eat next to nothing.

I remember, too, a Rev. Mr. Bull, to whom he introduced us subsequently at Bradford. We passed the evening with this gentleman at the house of Mr. Wood, of the firm of Walker and Wood, to whom also we had letters from Lord Shaftesbury. He, like our host, was an ardent advocate of the ten hours' bill, but unlike him, had very little hope of legislative interference. Messrs. Walker and Wood employed three thousand hands. At a sacrifice of some thousands per annum, they worked their hands an hour less than any of their neighbours, which left the hours, as Mr. Wood strongly declared, still too long. Those gentlemen had built and endowed a church and a school for their hands, and everything was done in their mill which could humanise and improve the lot of the men, women, and children. Mr. Bull, who was to be the incumbent of the new church, then not quite finished, was far less hopeful than his patron. He told me that he looked forward to some tremendous popular outbreak, and should not be surprised any night to hear that every mill in Bradford was in flames.

But perhaps the most remarkable individual with whom this Lancashire journey brought us into contact, was a Mr. Oastler. He was the Danton of the movement. He would have been a remarkable

man in any position or calling in life. He was a very large and powerfully framed man, over six feet in height, and proportionately large of limb and shoulder. He would, perhaps, hardly have been said to be a handsome man. His face was coarse, and in parts of it heavy. But he had a most commanding presence, and he was withal a picturesque—if it be not more accurate to say a statuesque—figure. Some of the features, too, were good. He had a very keen and intelligent blue eye, a mass of iron grey hair, lips, the scornful curl of which was terrible, and with all this a voice stentorian in its power, and yet flexible, with a flow of language rapid and abundant as the flow of a great river, and as unstemmable—the very *beau-idéal* of a mob orator.

"In the evening," says my diary, "we drove out to Stayley Bridge to hear the preaching of Stephens, the man who has become the subject of so much newspaper celebrity." (Does any one remember who he was?) "We reached a miserable little chapel, filled to suffocation, and besieged by crowds around the doors. We entered through the vestry with very great difficulty, and only so by the courtesy of sundry persons who relinquished their places, on Doherty's representing to them that we were strangers from a distance and friends to the cause. Presently Stephens arrived, and a man who had been ranting in the pulpit, merely, as it seemed, to occupy the people till he should come, immediately yielded his place to him. Stephens

spoke well, and said some telling words in that place, of the cruel and relentless march of the great Juggernauth, Gold. But I did not hear anything which seemed to me to justify his great reputation. Really the most striking part of the performance, and that which I thought seemed to move the people most, was Oastler's mounting the pulpit and giving out the verses of a hymn, one by one, which the congregation sang after him." So says my diary. Him I remember well, though Stephens not at all. I remember, too, the pleasure with which I listened to his really fine delivery of the lines; his pronunciation of the words was not incorrect, and when he spoke, as I heard him on sundry subsequent occasions, his language, though emphasised rather, as it seemed, than marred by a certain roughness of Lancashire accent, was not that of an uncultivated man. Yes! Oastler, the King of Lancashire as the people liked to call him, was certainly a man of power, and an advocate whom few platform orators would have cared to meet as an adversary.

When my mother's notes for her projected novel were completed, we thought that before turning our faces southwards, we would pay a flying visit to the lake district, which was new ground to both of us. I remember well my intense delight at my first introduction to mountains worthy of the name. But I mean to mention here two only of my reminiscences of that first visit to lake-land.

The first of these concerns an excursion on

Windermere with Captain Hamilton, the author of *Cyril Thornton*, which had at that time made its mark. He had recently received a new boat, which had been built for him in Norway. He expected great performances from her, and as there was a nice fresh wind idly curling the surface of the lake, he invited us to come out with him and try her, and in a minute or two we were speeding merrily before the breeze towards the opposite shore. But about the middle of the lake we found the water a good deal rougher, and the wind began to increase notably. Hamilton held the tiller, and not liking to make fast the haulyard of the sail, gave me the rope to hold, with instructions to hold on till further orders. He was a perfect master of the business in hand, and so was the new boat a perfect mistress of *her* business, but this did not prevent us from getting thoroughly ducked. My attention was sufficiently occupied in obeying my orders, and keeping my eye on him in expectation of fresh ones. The wind meanwhile increased from minute to minute, and I could not help perceiving that Hamilton, despite his cheery laughter, was becoming a little anxious. We got back, however, to the shore we had left after a good buffeting, and in the condition of drowned rats. My mother was helped out of the boat, and while she was making her way up the bank, and I was helping him to make the boat secure, I said, "Well! the new boat has done bravely!" "Between you and me, my dear fellow," said he, as he laid his hand on my shoulder with

a grip, that I think must have left his thumb-mark on the skin, "if the boat had not behaved better than any boat of her class that I ever saw, there would have been a considerable probability of our being dined on by the fishes, instead of dining together, as I hope we are going to do! I have been blaming myself for taking your mother out; but the truth is that on these lakes it is really impossible to tell for half an hour what the next half hour may bring forth."

The one other incident of our visit to lake-land which I will record, was our visit to Wordsworth.

For my part I managed to incur his displeasure while yet on the threshold of his house. We were entering it together, when observing a very fine bay-tree by the door-side, I unfortunately expressed surprise at its luxuriance in such a position. "Why should you be surprised?" he asked, suddenly turning upon me with much displeasure in his manner. Not a little disconcerted, I hesitatingly answered that I had imagined the bay-tree required more and greater warmth of sunshine than it could find there. "Pooh!" said he, much offended at the slight cast on his beloved locality, "what has sunshine got to do with it?"

I had not the readiness to reply, that in truth the world had abundance of testimony that the bay could flourish in those latitudes! But I think, had I done so it might have made my peace—for the remainder of that evening's experiences led me to imagine that the great poet was not

insensible to incense from very small and humble worshippers.

The evening, I think I may say the entire evening, was occupied by a monologue addressed by the poet to my mother, who was of course extremely well pleased to listen to it. I was chiefly occupied in talking to my old schoolfellow, Herbert Hill, Southey's nephew, who also passed the evening there, and with whom I had a delightful walk the next day. But I did listen with much pleasure when Wordsworth recited his own lines descriptive of Little Langdale. He gave them really exquisitely. But his manner in conversation was not impressive. He sat continuously looking down with a green shade over his eyes even though it was twilight; and his mode of speech and delivery suggested to me the epithet "maundering," though I was ashamed of myself for the thought with reference to such a man. As we came away I cross-examined my mother much as to the subjects of his talk. She said it had been all about himself and his works, and that she had been interested. But I could not extract from her a word that had passed worth recording.

I do not think that he was popular with his neighbours generally. There were stories current, at Lowther among other places, which imputed to him a tendency to outstay his welcome when invited to visit in a house. I suspect there was a little bit of a feud between him and my brother-in-law, Mr. Tilley, who was the Post Office surveyor of

the district. Wordsworth as receiver of taxes, or issuer of licenses or whatever it was, would have increased the profits of his place if the mail coach had paid its dues, whether for taxes or license, at his end of the journey instead of at Kendal, as had been the practice. But of course any such change would have been as much to the detriment of the man at Kendal as to Wordsworth's advantage. And my brother-in-law, thinking such a change unjust, would not permit it.

I cannot say that on the whole the impression made on me by the poet on that occasion (always with the notable exception of his recital of his own poetry) was a pleasant one. There was something in the manner in which he almost perfunctorily, as it seemed, uttered his long monologue, that suggested the idea of the performance of a part got up to order, and repeated without much modification as often as lion-hunters, duly authorised for the sport in those localities, might call upon him for it. I dare say the case is analogous to that of the hero and the valet, but such was my impression.

CHAPTER II.

I HAD been for some time past, as has been said, trying my hand, not without success, at a great variety of articles in all sorts of reviews, magazines, and newspapers. I already considered myself a member of the guild of professional writers. I had done much business with publishers on behalf of my mother, and some for other persons, and talked glibly of copyrights, editions, and tokens.

(I fancy, by the by, that the latter term has somewhat fallen out of use in these latter days, whether from any change of the methods used by printers or publishers I do not know. But it strikes me that many youngsters, even of the scribbling tribe, may not know that the phrase "a token" had no connection whatever with signs and wonders of any sort, but simply meant two hundred and fifty copies.)

And being thus equipped, I began to think that it was time that I should attempt *a book*. During a previous hurried scamper in Normandy I had just a glimpse of Brittany, which greatly excited my desire to see more of it. So I pitched on a tour in Brittany as the subject of my first attempt.

Those were happy days, when all the habitable globe had not been run over by thousands of tourists, hundreds of whom are desirous of describing their doings in print—not but that the notion, whether a publisher's or writer's notion, that new ground is needed for the production of a good and amusing book of travels, is other than a great mistake. I forget what proposing author it was, who in answer to a publisher urging the fact that "a dozen writers have told us all about so and so," replied, "But *I* have not told you what *I* have seen and thought about it." But if I had been the publisher I should at once have asked to see his MS. The days when a capital book may be written on a *voyage autour de ma chambre* are as present as ever they were. And "A Summer Afternoon's Walk to Highgate" might be the subject of a delightful book if only the writer were the right man.

Brittany, however, really was in those days to a great extent fresh ground, and the strangely secluded circumstances of its population offered much tempting material to the book-making tourist. All this is now at an end; not so much because the country has been the subject of sundry good books of travel, as because the people and their mode of life, the country and its specialties have all been utterly changed by the pleasant, convenient, indispensable, abominable railway, which in its merciless irresistible tramp across the world crushes into a dead level of uninteresting monotony so many varieties of character, manners, and peculiarities.

And thus "the individual withers, and the world is more and more!" But *is* the world more and more in any sense that can be admitted to be desirable, in view of the eternity of that same individual?

As for the Bretons, the individual has withered to that extent that he now wears trousers instead of breeches, while his world has become more and more assimilated to that of the Faubourg St. Antoine, with the result of losing all those really very notable and stiff and sturdy virtues which differentiated the Breton peasant, when I first knew him, while it would be difficult indeed to say what it has gained. At all events the progress which can be stated is mainly to be stated in negatives. The Breton, as I first knew him, believed in all sorts of superstitious rubbish. He now believes in nothing at all. He was disposed to honour and respect God, and his priest, and his seigneur perhaps somewhat too indiscriminately. Now he neither honours nor respects any earthly or heavenly thing. These at least were the observations which a second, or rather third visit to the country a few years ago suggested to me, mainly, it is true, as regards the urban population. And without going into any of the deeper matters which such changes suggest to one's consideration, there can be no possible doubt as to the fact that the country and its people are infinitely less interesting than they were.

My plans were soon made, and I hastened to lay them before Mr. Colburn, who was at that time

publishing for my mother. The trip was my main object, and I should have been perfectly contented with terms that paid all the expenses of it. *Dî auctius fecerunt*, and I came home from my ramble with a good round sum in my pocket.

I was not greedy of money in those days, and had no unscriptural hankerings after laying up treasure upon earth. All I wanted was a sufficient supply for my unceasing expenditure in locomotion and inn bills—the latter, be it observed, always on a most economical scale. I was not a profitable customer; I took nothing "for the good of the house." I had a Gargantuesque appetite, and needed food of some sort in proportion to its demands. I neither took, or cared to take, any wine with my dinner, and never wanted any description of "nightcap." As for accommodation for the night, anything sufficed me that gave me a clean bed and a sufficient window-opening on fresh air, under such conditions as made it possible for me to have it open all night. To the present day I cannot sleep to my liking in a closed chamber; and before now, on the top of the Righi, have had my bed clothes blown off my bed, and snow deposited where they should have been.

But *quo musa tendis?* I was talking about my travels in Brittany.

I do not think my book was a bad *coup d'essai.* I remember old John Murray coming out to me into the front office in Albemarle Street, where I was on some business of my mother's, with a broad good-natured smile on his face, and putting into my hands the

Times of that morning, with a favourable notice of the book, saying as he did so, "There, so *you* have waked this morning to find yourself famous!" And, what was more to the purpose, my publisher was content with the result, as was evidenced by his offering me similar terms for another book of the same description—of which, more anon.

As my volumes on Brittany, published in 1840, are little likely to come under the eye of any reader at the present day, and as the passage I am about to quote indicates accurately enough the main point of difference between what the traveller at that day saw and what the traveller of the present day may see, I think I may be pardoned for giving it.

"We had observed that at Broons a style of *coiffure* which was new to us prevailed; and my companion wished to add a sketch of it to his fast-increasing collection of Breton costumes. With this view, he had begun making love to the maid a little, to induce her to do so much violence to her maiden modesty, as to sit to him for a few minutes, when a far better opportunity of achieving his object presented itself.

"The landlady's daughter, a very pretty little girl about fourteen years old, was going to be confirmed, and had just come down stairs to her mother, who was sitting knitting in the *salle à manger*, for inspection and approval before she started. Of course, upon such an occasion, the art of the *blanchisseuse* was taxed to the utmost. Lace was not spared; and the most *recherché coiffure* was adopted, that

the rigorous immutability of village modes would permit.

"It would seem that the fickleness of fashion exercises in constant local variations that mutability which is utterly denied to it in Brittany with regard to time. Every district, almost every commune has its own peculiar 'mode' (for both sexes) which changes not from generation to generation. As the mothers dress, so do their daughters, so did their grandmothers, and so will their grand-daughters." [But I reckoned when writing thus without the rail-road and its consequences.] "If a woman of one parish marries, or takes service, or for any other cause resides in another, she still retains the mode of her native village; and thus carries about her a mark, which is to those, among whom she is a sojourner, a well-recognised indication of the place whence she comes, and to herself a cherished souvenir of the home which she never ceases to consider her own country.

"But though the form of the dress is invariable, and every inhabitant of the commune, from the wealthy farmer's wife to the poorest cottager who earns her black bread by labour in the fields, would as soon think of adopting male attire as of innovating on the immemorial *mode du pays*, yet the quality of the materials allows scope for wealth and female coquetry to show themselves. Thus the invariable *mode de Broons*, with its trifling difference in form, which in the eye of the inhabitants made it as different as light from darkness from the *mode de*

St. Jouan,' was equally observable in the coarse linen *coiffe* of the maid, and the richly-laced and beautifully 'got up' head-dress of the daughter of the house.

"A very slight observation of human nature under a few only of its various phases may suffice to show that the instinct which prompts a woman to adorn her person to the best possible advantage is not the hot-house growth of cities, but a genuine wild flower of nature. No high-born beauty ever more repeatedly or anxiously consulted her wax-lit *psyché* on every faultless point of hair, face, neck, feet, and figure, before descending to the carriage for her first ball, than did our young Bretonne again and again recur to the mirror, which occupied the pier between the two windows of the *salle à manger*, before sallying forth on the great occasion of her confirmation.

"The dear object of girlish ambition was the same to both; but the simplicity of the little *paysanne* showed itself in the utter absence of any wish to conceal her anxiety upon the subject. Though delighted with our compliments on her appearance, our presence by no means prevented her from springing upon a chair every other minute to obtain a fuller view of the *tout ensemble* of her figure. Again and again the modest kerchief was arranged and rearranged to show a hair's breadth more or a hair's breadth less of her brown but round and taper throat. Repeatedly, before it could be finally adjusted to her satisfaction, was the delicate fabric of her *coiffure* moved with cautious care and dainty touch a *leetle*

backwarder or a *leetle* forwarder over her sun-browned brow.

"Many were the pokings and pinchings of frock and apron, the smoothings down before and twitchings down behind of the not less anxious mother. Often did she retreat to examine more correctly the general effect of the *coup d'œil,* and as often return to rectify some injudicious pin or remodel some rebellious fold. When all was at length completed, and the well-pleased parent had received from the servants, called in for the express purpose, the expected tribute of admiration, the little beauty took *L'Imitation de la Vierge* in her hand, and tripped across to a convent of *Sœurs Grises* on the other side of the way to receive their last instructions and admonitions respecting her behaviour when she should be presented to the bishop, while her mother screamed after her not to forget to pull up her frock when she kneeled down.

"All the time employed in this little revision of the toilet had not been left unimproved by my companion, who at the end of it produced and showed to the proud mother an admirable full-length sketch of her pretty darling. The delighted astonishment of the poor woman, and her accent, as she exclaimed, '*O, si c'était pour moi!*' and then blushed to the temples at what she had said, were irresistible, and the good-natured artist was fain to make her a present of the drawing."

My Breton book ("though I says it as shouldn't") is not a bad one, especially as regards the upper or

northern part of the province. That which concerns Lower Brittany is very imperfect, mainly, I take it, because I had already nearly filled my destined two volumes when I reached it. I find there, however, the following notice of the sardine fishery, which has some interest at the present day. Perhaps the majority of the thousands of English people who nowadays have "sardines" on their breakfast-table every morning are not aware that the contents of a very large number of the little tin boxes which are supposed to contain the delicacy are not sardines at all. They are very excellent little fishes, but not sardines; for the enormously increased demand for them has outstripped the supply. In the days when the following sentences were written sardines might certainly be had in London (as what might not?) at such shops as Fortnum and Mason's, but they were costly, and by no means commonly met with.

On reaching Douarnenez in the summer of 1839 I wrote:—"The whole population and the existence of Douarnenez depend on the sardine fishery. This delicious little fish, which the *gourmands* of Paris so much delight in, when preserved in oil, and sent to their capital in those little tin boxes whose look must be *familiar to all who have frequented the Parisian breakfast-houses*" [but is now more familiar to all who have entered any grocer's shop throughout the length and breadth of England], "is still more exquisite when eaten fresh on the shores which it frequents. They are caught in

immense quantities along the whole of the southern coast of Brittany, and on the western shore of Finisterre as far to the northward as Brest, which, I believe, is the northern limit of the fishery. They come into season about the middle of June, and are then sold in great quantities in all the markets of southern Brittany at two, three, or four sous a dozen, according to the abundance of the fishery and the distance of the market from the coast. I was told that the commerce in sardines along the coast from l'Orient to Brest amounted to three millions of francs annually."

At the present day it must be enormously larger. I remember well the exceeding plentifulness of the little fishes—none of them so large as many of those which now fill the so-called sardine boxes—when I was at Douarnenez in 1839. All the men, women, and children in the place seemed to be feasting upon them all day long. Plates with heaps of them fried and piled up crosswise, like timber in a timber-yard, were to be seen outdoors and in-doors, wherever three or four people could be found together. All this was a thing of the past when I revisited Douarnenez in 1866. Every fish was then needed for the tinning business. They were to be had of course by ordering and paying for them, but very few indeed were consumed by the population of the place.

And this subject reminds me of another fishery which I witnessed a few months ago—last March—at Sestri di Ponente, near Genoa. We frequently

saw nearly the whole of the fisher population of the place engaged in dragging from the water on to the sands enormously long nets, which had been previously carried out by boats to a distance not more I think than three or four hundred yards from the shore. From these nets, when at last they were landed after an hour or so of continual dragging by a dozen or twenty men and women, were taken huge baskets-full of silvery little fish sparkling in the sun, *exactly* like whitebait. I had always supposed that whitebait was a specialty of the Thames. Whether an icthyologist would have pronounced the little Sestri fishes to be the same creatures as those which British statesmen consume at Greenwich I cannot say; but we ate them frequently at the hotel under the name of *gianchetti*, and could find *no* difference between them and the Greenwich delicacy. The season for them did not seem to last above two or three weeks. The fishermen continued to drag their net, but caught other fishes instead of *gianchetti*. But while it lasted the plenty of them was prodigious. All Sestri was eating them, as all Douarnenez ate sardines in the old days. When the net with its sparkling cargo was dragged up on the sand and the contents were being shovelled into huge baskets to be carried up into the town, the men would take up handfuls of them, fresh, and I suppose still living, from the sea, and plunging their bearded mouths in them, eat them up by hundreds. The children too, irrepressibly thronging round the net, would pick from its meshes

the fishes which adhered to them and eat them, as more inland rising generations eat blackberries. I did not try the experiment of eating them thus, as one eats oysters, but I can testify that, crisply fried, and eaten with brown bread and butter and lemon juice, they were remarkably good.

Fortified by the excellent example of Sir Francis Doyle, who in his extremely amusing volume of *Reminiscences* gives as a reason for disregarding the claims of chronology in the composition of it, the chances that he might forget the matter he had in his mind if he did not book it at once, I have ventured for the same reason to do the same thing here. But I have an older authority for the practice in question, which Sir Francis is hardly likely to have lighted on. That learned antiquary and portentously voluminous writer, Francesco Cancellieri, who was well known to the Roman world in the latter years of the last, and the earliest years of the present, century, used to compose his innumerable works upon a similar principle. And when attacked by the critics his cotemporaries, who Italian-like supposed academically correct form to be the most important thing in any literary work, he defended himself on the same ground. "If I don't catch it *now*, I may probably forget it; and is the world to be deprived of the information it is in my power to give it, for the sake of the formal correctness of my work?"

There is another passage in my book on Brittany respecting which it would be interesting to know

whether recent travellers can report that the state of things there described no longer exists. I wrote in 1839—

"Very near Treguier, on a spot appropriately selected for such a worship—the barren top of a bleak unsheltered eminence—stands the chapel of *Notre Dame de la Haine!* Our Lady of HATRED! The most fiendish of human passions is supposed to be under the protection of Christ's religion! What is this but a fragment of pure and unmixed Paganism, unchanged except in the appellation of its idol, which has remained among these lineal descendants of the Armorican Druids for more than a thousand years after Christianity has become the professed religion of the country! Altars, professedly Christian, were raised under the protection of the Protean Virgin, to the demon *Hatred;* and have continued to the present day to receive an unholy worship from blinded bigots, who hope to obtain Heaven's patronage and assistance for thoughts and wishes which they would be ashamed to breathe to man. Three *Aves* repeated with devotion at this odious and melancholy shrine are firmly believed to have the power to cause, within the year, the certain death of the person against whom the assistance of Our Lady of Hatred has been invoked. And it is said that even yet occasionally, in the silence and obscurity of the evening, the figure of some assassin worshipper at this accursed shrine may be seen to glide rapidly from the solitary spot, where he has spoken the

unhallowed prayer whose mystic might has doomed to death the enemy he *hates.*"

I must tell one other story of my Breton recollections, which refers to a time much subsequent to the publication of the book I have been quoting. It was in 1866 that I revisited Brittany in company with my present wife; and one of the objects of our little tour was the Finisterre land's end at the extreme point of the horn-like promontory which forms the department so named. We found some difficulty in reaching the spot, not the least part of which was caused by the necessity of threading our way, when in the immediate neighbourhood of the cliffs, among enormous masses of seaweed stacked in huge heaps and left to undergo the process of decay, which turns it into very valuable manure. The odour which impregnated the whole surrounding atmosphere from these heaps was decidedly the worst and most asphyxiating I ever experienced.

We stood at last on the utmost *Finis terræ* and looked over the Atlantic not only from the lighthouse, which, built three hundred feet above the sea level, is often, we were told, drenched by storm-driven spray, but from various points of the tremendous rocks also. They are tremendous, in truth. The scene is a much grander one than that at our own "Land's End," which I visited a month or two ago. The cliffs are much higher, the rocks are more varied in their forms—more cruelly savage-looking, and the cleavages of them are on

a larger scale. The spot was one of the most profound solitude, for we were far from the light-house, and the scream of the white gulls as they started from their roosting-places on the face of the rocks, or returned to them from their swirling flights, were the only indication of the presence of any creature having the breath of life.

The rock ledges, among which we were clambering, were in many places fearful spots enough —places where a stumble or a divagation of the foot but six or eight inches from the narrow path would have precipitated the blunderer to assured and inevitable destruction. "Here," said I to my wife, as we stood side by side on one such ledge, "would be the place for a husband, who wanted to get rid of his wife, to accomplish his purpose. Done in ten seconds! With absolute certainty! One push would suffice! No cry of any more avail than the screams of those gulls! And no possibility of the deed being witnessed by any mortal eye!"

I had hardly got the words out of my mouth before our ears were startled by a voice hailing us; and after some searching of the eye we espied a man engaged in seeking sea-fowls' eggs, who had placed himself in a position which I should have thought it absolutely impossible to reach, whence he had seen us, as we now saw him!

Let this then, my brethren, be a warning to you!

CHAPTER III.

RETURNING from my Breton journey, I reached my mother's house in York Street on the 23rd of July, 1839, and on the 26th of the same month left London with her to visit my married sister in her new home at Penrith, where Mr. Tilley had established himself as Post Office surveyor of the northern district. His home was a pretty house situated between the town and the well-known beacon on the hill to the north of it.

The first persons I became acquainted with in this, to me, entirely new region, were Sir George Musgrave, of Edenhall, and his wife, who was a sister of Sir James Graham. My brother-in-law took me over to Edenhall, a lovely walk from Penrith, and we found both Sir George and Lady Musgrave at home. We—my mother and I—had not at that time conceived the idea of becoming residents at Penrith. But when subsequently we were led to do so, we found extremely pleasant and friendly neighbours at Edenhall, and though not in strict chronology due in this place, I may

throw together my few reminiscences of Sir George.

He was the *beau-idéal* of a country gentleman of the old school. He rarely or never went to London—not, as was the case with some of his neighbours, because the expense of a season there was formidable, for his estate was a fine one, and he was a rich man living largely within his income, but because his idea was, that a country gentleman's proper place was on his own acres, and because London had no temptations for him. He was said to be the best landlord in the county, and really seemed to look upon all his numerous tenants, and all their labourers, as his born subjects, to whom protection, kindness, assistance, and general looking after were due, in return for their fealty and loyal attachment. I think he would have kicked off his land (and he was a man who could kick) any man who talked in his hearing of the purely commercial relationship between a landlord and his tenants. Of course he was adored by all the country side. No doubt the stout Cumberland and Westmoreland farmers and hinds were good and loyal subjects of Queen Victoria, but for all practical purposes of reverence and obedience, Musgrave was king at Edenhall.

Lady Musgrave was a particularly lady-like woman, the marked elegance of whose breeding might, with advantage, have given the tone to many a London drawing-room. I have seen her surrounded by country neighbours, and though she

was *velut inter ignes luna minores*, I never saw the country squire's or country parson's wife, who was not perfectly happy and at ease in her drawing-room, while unconsciously all the time taking a lesson in good breeding and lady-like manners. She was thoroughly a help-meet for her husband in all his care for his people. I believe that both he and she were convinced at the bottom of their hearts that Cumberland and Westmoreland constituted the choicest, best, and most highly civilised part of England. And she was one of those of whom I was thinking, when in a former chapter I spoke of highly educated people whom I had known to affect provincialism of speech. Lady Musgrave always, or perhaps it would be more correct to say generally, called a cow a "coo," and though I suspect she would have left Westmoreland behind if evil fate had called her to London, on her own hill-sides she preferred the accents of the native speech.

Sir George had, or affected to have, considerable respect for all the little local superstitions and beliefs which are so prevalent in that "north countree." And the kindness with which he welcomed us as neighbours, when we built a house and came to live there, was shown despite a strong feeling which he had, or affected to have, with regard to an incident which fatally marked our *début* in that country.

We bought a field in a very beautiful situation overlooking the ruins of Brougham Castle and

the confluence of the Eden with the Lowther, and proceeded to build a house on the higher part of it. But there was a considerable drop from the lower limit of our ground to the road which skirted the property, and furnished the only access to it. There was some difficulty, therefore, in contriving a tolerable entrance from the road for wheel traffic, and it was found necessary to cause a tiny little spring that rose in the bank by the roadside to change its course in some small degree. The affair seemed to us a matter of infinitesimal importance, but Sir George was dismayed. We had moved, he said, a holy well, and the consequence would surely be that we should never succeed in establishing ourselves in that spot.

And surely enough we never did so succeed; for, after having built a very nice little house, and lived in it one winter and half a summer, we—for I cannot say that it was my mother more than I, or I more than my mother—made up our minds that "the sun yoked his horses too far from Penrith town," and that we had had enough of it. Sir George, of course, when he heard our determination, while he expressed all possible regret at losing us as neighbours, said that he knew perfectly well that it must be so, from the time that we so recklessly meddled with the holy well.

He was the most hospitable man in the world, and could never let many days pass without asking us to dine with him. But his hospitality was of

quite the old world school. One day, but that was after our journey to Italy and when he had become intimate with us, being in a hurry to get back into the drawing-room to rejoin a pretty girl next whom I had sat at dinner, I tried to escape from the dining-room. "Come back!" he roared, before I could get to the door, "we won't have any of your d—d forineering habits here! Come back and stick to your wine, or by the Lord I'll have the door locked."

He was, unlike most men of his sort, not very fond of riding, but was a great walker. He used to take the men he could get to walk with him a tramp over the hill, till they were fain to cry "Hold! enough!" But *there* I was his match.

Most of my readers have probably heard of the "Luck of Edenhall," for besides Longfellow's[1] well-known poem, the legend relating to it has often been told in print. I refer to it here merely to mention a curious trait of character in Sir George Musgrave in connection with it. The "Luck of Edenhall" is an ancient decorated glass goblet, which has belonged to the Musgraves time out of mind, and which bears on it the legend:—

"When this cup shall break or fall,
Farewell the luck of Edenhall."

[1] Subsequently to the publication of his poem Musgrave asked Longfellow to dine at Edenhall, and "picked a crow" with him on the conclusion of the poem, which represents the "Luck" to have been broken, which Sir George considered a flight of imagination quite transcending all permissible poetical licence.

After what I have written of Sir George and the holy well, which we so unfortunately moved from its proper site, it will be readily imagined that he attached no small importance to the safe keeping of the "Luck;" and truly he did so. But instead of simply locking it up, where he might feel sure it could neither break nor fall, he would show it to all visitors, and not content with that, would insist on their taking it into their hands to examine and handle it. He maintained that otherwise there was no fair submission to the test of luck, which was intended by the inscription. It would have been mere cowardly prevarication to lock it away under circumstances which took the matter out of the dominion of "luck" altogether. I wonder that under such circumstances it has not fallen, for the nervous trepidation of the folks who were made to handle it may be imagined!

I made another friend at Penrith in the person of a man as strongly contrasted with Sir George Musgrave as two north-country Englishmen could well be. This was a Dr. Nicholson, who has died within the last few months, to my great regret, for I had promised myself the great pleasure of taking him by the hand yet once again before starting on the journey on which we may, or may not meet. He was my senior by a few years, but not by many. Nicholson was a man of very extensive reading and of profound Biblical learning. It may be deemed surprising by others, as it was, and is, to me, that such a man should have been an earnest and

thoroughly convinced Swedenborgian — but such was the case. And I can conscientiously give this testimony to the excellence of that creed—that it produced in the person of its learned north-country disciple at least one truly good and amiable man. Dr. Nicholson was emphatically such in all the relations of life. He was the good and loving husband of a very charming wife, the unremittingly careful and affectionate father of a large family, a delightful host at his own table, an excellent and instructive companion over a cigar (hardly correctly alluded to in the singular number!) and a most *jucundus comes* in a tramp over the hills.

Amusing to me still is the contrast between those Cumberland walks with Sir George and my ramblings over the same or nearly the same ground with the meditative Swedenborgian doctor;—the first always pushing ahead as if shouldering along a victorious path through life, knowing the history of every foot of ground he passed over, interested in every detail of it, and with an air of continually saying "Ha! ha!" among the breezy trumpets of those hills, like the scriptural war-horse; the second with his gaze very imperfectly turned outward, but very fruitfully turned inward, frequently pausing with argumentative finger laid on his companion's breast, and smile half satirical half kindly as the flow of discourse revealed theological *lacunæ* in my acquirements, which, I fear, irreparably and most unfairly injured the Regius professor of divinity in the mind of the German graduate. For Nicholson

was a theological "doctor" by virtue of a degree from I forget what German university, and had a low estimate, perhaps more justified at that day than it would be now, of the extent and calibre of Oxford theological learning. He was himself a disciple, and an enthusiastic admirer of Ewald, a very learned Hebraist, and an unflagging student.

I was more capable of appreciating at its due value the extent and accuracy of his knowledge upon another subject—a leg of mutton! It *may* be a mere coincidence, but certainly the most learned Hebraist it was ever my lot to know was also the best and most satisfactory carver of a leg of mutton.

Nobody knows anything about mutton in these days, for the very sufficient reason that there is no mutton worth knowing anything about. Scientific breeding has improved it off the face of the earth. The immature meat is killed at two years old, and only we few survivors of a former generation know how little like it is to the mutton of former days. The Monmouthshire farmers told me the other day that they could not keep Welsh sheep of pure breed, because nothing under an eight-foot park paling would confine them. Just as if they did not jump in the days when I jumped too! Believe me, my young friends, that George the Third knew what he was talking about (as upon certain other occasions) when he said that very little venison was equal to a haunch of four-year-old mutton. And the gravy!—chocolate-coloured, not pink, my innocent young friends. Ichabod! Ichabod!

My uncle, too, Mr. Partington—who married my father's sister, and lived many years chairman of quarter sessions at Offham, among the South Downs, near Lewes—there was a man who understood mutton! A little silver saucepan was placed by his side when the leg of mutton, or sometimes two, about as big as fine fowls, were placed in one dish before him. Then, after the mutton had been cut, the abundantly flowing gravy was transferred to the saucepan, a couple of glasses of tawny old port, and a *quantum suff.* of currant jelly and cayenne were added, the whole was warmed in the dining-room, and then—we ate mutton, as I shall never eat it again in this world!

Well! *revenir à nos moutons* we never, never shall! So we must, alas! do the reverse in returning to my Penrith reminiscences.

I remember specially an excellent old fellow and very friendly neighbour, Colonel Macleod, a bachelor, who having fallen in love with a very beautiful spot, in the valley of the Lowther, built an ugly brick house, three stories high, because, as he said, he was so greedy of the view, forgetful apparently that he was providing it mainly for his maid servants. Then there was the old maiden lady, with a name that might have been found in north-country annals at almost any date during the last seven hundred years, who mildly and maternally corrected my sister at table for speaking of *vol-au-vent*, telling her that the correct expression was *voulez-vous!* My sister always adopted the old

lady's correction in future, at least when addressing her.

Then there were two pretty girls, Margaret and Charlotte Story, the nieces of old De Whelpdale, the lord of the manor. I think he and Mrs. De Whelpdale never left their room, for I do not remember to have ever seen either of them; nor do I remember that I at all resented their absence from the drawing-room when I used to call at the manor house. One of the girls was understood to be engaged to be married to a far distant lieutenant, of whom Penrith knew nothing, which circumstance gave rise to sundry ingenious conceits in the acrostic line, based on allusions to "his story" and "mystery!" I wonder whether Charlotte is alive! If she is, and should see this page, she will remember! It was for her sake that I deserted, or tried to desert, Sir George's port, as related above.

We left Penrith on that occasion without having formed any decided intention of establishing ourselves there, and returned to London towards the end of August, 1839. During the next two months I was hard at work completing the MS. of my volumes on Brittany. And in November of the same year, after that long fast from all journeying, my mother and I left London for a second visit to Paris. But we did not on this occasion travel together.

I left London some days earlier than she did, and travelled by Ostend, Cologne, and Mannheim, my principal object being to visit my old friend, Mrs. Fauche, who was living at the latter place. I

passed three or four very pleasant days there, including, as I find by my diary, sundry agreeable jaunts to Heidelberg, Carlsruhe, &c. My mother and I had arranged to meet at Paris on the 4th of December, and at that date I punctually turned up there.

I think that I saw Paris and the Parisians much more satisfactorily on this occasion than during my first visit; and I suspect that some of the recollections recorded in these pages as connected with my first visit to Paris, belong really to this second stay there, especially I think that this must have been the case with regard to my acquaintance with Chateaubriand, though I certainly was introduced to him at the earlier period, for I find the record of much talk with him about Brittany, which was a specially welcome subject to him.

It was during this second visit that I became acquainted with Henry Bulwer, afterwards Lord Dalling, and at that time first secretary of the British legation. My visits were generally, perhaps always, paid to him when he was in bed, where he was lying confined by, if I remember rightly, a broken leg. I used to find his bed covered with papers and blue-books, and the like. And I was told that the whole, or at all events the more important part of the business of the embassy was done by him as he lay there on the bed, which must have been for many a long hour a bed of suffering.

Despite certain affectations — which were so

palpably affectations, and scarcely pretended to be aught else, that there was little or nothing annoying or offensive in them—he was a very agreeable man, and was unquestionably a very brilliant one. He came to dine with me, I remember, many years afterwards at my house in Florence, when he insisted (the dining-room being on the first floor) on being carried up stairs, as we thought at the time very unnecessarily. But for aught I know such suspicion may have wronged him. At all events his disability, whatever it may have been, did not prevent him from making himself very agreeable.

One of our guests upon that same occasion (I must drag the mention of the fact in head and shoulders here, or else I shall forget it), was that extraordinary man, Baron Ward, who was, or perhaps I ought to say at that time had been, prime minister and general administrator to the Duke of Lucca. Ward had been originally brought from Yorkshire to be an assistant in the ducal stables. There, doubtless because he knew more about the business than anybody else concerned with it, he soon became chief. In that capacity he made himself so acceptable to the Duke, that he was taken from the stables to be his highness's personal attendant. His excellence in that position soon enlarged his duties to those of controller of the whole ducal household. And thence, by degrees that were more imperceptible in the case of such a government than they could have been in a larger and more regularly administered state, Ward became the

recognised, and nearly all-powerful head, manager, and ruler of the little Duchy of Lucca. And I believe the strange promotion was much for the advantage of the Duke and of the Duke's subjects. Ward, I take it, never robbed him or any one else. And this eccentric specialty, the Duke, though he was no Solomon, had the wit to discover. In his cups the ex-groom, ex-valet, was not reticent about his sovereign master, and his talk was not altogether of an edifying nature. One sally sticks in my memory. "Ah, yes! He was a grand favourite with the women. But *I* have had the grooming of him; and it was a wuss job than ever grooming his hosses was!"

Ward got very drunk that night, I remember, and we deemed it fortunate that our diplomatist guest had departed before the outward signs of his condition became manifest.

Henry Bulwer, by mere circumstance of synchronism, has suggested the remembrance of Ward, Ward has called up the Duke of Lucca, and he brings with him a host of Baths of Lucca reminiscences respecting his Serene Highness and others. But all these *must* be left to find their places, if anywhere, when I come to them later on, or we shall never get back to Paris.

It was on this our second visit to *Lutetia Parisiorum* that my mother and I made acquaintance with a very specially charming family of the name of D'Henin. The family circle consisted of General le Vicomte D'Henin, his English wife, and their

daughter. The general was a delightful old man, more like an English general officer than any other Frenchman I ever met. Madame D'Henin was like an Englishwoman not unaccustomed to courts and wholly unspoiled by them. Mademoiselle D'Henin, very pretty, united the qualities of a denizen of the inmost circles of the fashionable world with those of a really serious student, to a degree I have never seen equalled. They were great friends of the Bishop of London, and Mademoiselle D'Henin used to correspond with him. She was earnestly religious, and I remember her telling me of a *démêlé* she had had with her confessor. She had told him in confession that she was in the habit of reading the English Bible. He strongly objected, and at last told her that he could not give her absolution unless she promised to discontinue the practice. She told him that rather than do so, she would take what would be to her the painful step of declaring herself a Protestant, whereupon he undertook to obtain a special permission for her to read the English Bible. Whether he did really take any such measures I don't know, and I fancy she never knew; but the upshot was that she continued to read the heretical book, and nothing more was ever said of refusing her absolution.

I have a large bundle of letters from this highly accomplished young lady to my mother. Many passages of them would be interesting and valuable to an historian of the reign of Louis Philippe. She

writes at great length, and her standpoint is the very centre of the monarchical side of the French political world of that day. But as I am *not* writing a history of the reign of Louis Philippe, I must content myself with extracting two or three suggestive notices.

In a letter dated from Paris, 19th July, 1840, she writes :—" You shew much hospitality towards your royal guests. But I assure you it will not in this instance be taken as an homage to superior merit—words which I have heard frequently applied here to John Bull's frenzy about Soult, and to the hospitality of the English towards the Duc de N[emours]. When I told him how much I should like to be in his place (*i.e.*, about to go to England), he protested that he would change places with no one, '*quand il s'agissait d'aller dans un aussi delicieux pays, que cette belle Angleterre, que vous avez si bonne raison d'aimer et d'admirer.*' "

On the 29th of August in the same year she writes at great length of the indignation and fury produced in Paris by the announcement of the Quadruple Alliance. She is immensely impressed by the fact that " people gathered in the streets and discussed the question in the open air." " Ireland, Poland, and Italy are to rise to the cry of Liberty." But she goes on to say, " Small causes produce great effects. Much of this warlike disposition has arisen from the fact of Thiers having bought a magnificent horse to ride beside the King at the late review." She proceeds to ridicule the minister in a tone very naturally suggested by the personal appearance of the little

great man under such circumstances, which no doubt furnished Paris with much fun. But she goes on to suggest that the personal vanity which made the prospect of such a public appearance alluring to him was reinforced by "certain other secondary but still important considerations of a different nature, looking to the results which might follow from the exhibition of a war policy. This desirable end being attained beyond even the most sanguine hopes, the martial fever seems on the decline."

Now all this gossip may be accepted as evidencing the tone prevailing in the very inmost circles of the citizen king's friends and surroundings, and as such is curious.

Writing on the 8th of October in the same year, after speaking at great length of Madame Laffarge, and of the extraordinary interest her trial excited, dividing all Paris into Laffargists and anti-Laffargists, and almost superseding war as a general topic of conversation, she passes to the then burning subject of the fortification of Paris, and writes as follows—curiously enough, considering the date of her letter:—

"Louis Philippe, whose favourite hobby it has ever been, from the idea that it makes him master of Paris, lays the first stone to-day. Some people consider it the first stone of the mausoleum of his dynasty. I sincerely hope not; for everything that can be called lady or gentleman runs a good chance of forming part of the funeral pile. The political madness which has taken possession of the public mind is fearful. Foreign or civil war! Such is the

alternative. Thiers, who governs the masses, flatters them by promises of war and conquest. The *Marsellaise*, so lately a sign of rebellion, is sung openly in the theatres; the soldiers under arms sing it in chorus. The Guarde Nationale urges the King to declare war. He has resisted it with all his power, but has now, they say, given way, and has given Thiers *carte blanche*. He is in fact entirely under his control. The Chambers are not consulted. Thiers is our absolute sovereign. We call ourselves a free people. We have beheaded one monarch, exiled three generations of kings merely to have a dictator, '*mal né, mal fait, et mal élevé*.' There has been a rumour of a change of ministry, but no one believes it. The overthrow of Thiers would be the signal for a revolution, and the fortifications are not yet completed to master it. May not all these armaments be the precursors of some *coup d'état?* A general gloom is over all around us. All the faces are long; all the conversations are sad!"

This may be accepted as a thoroughly accurate and trustworthy representation of the then state of feeling and opinion among the friends of Louis Philippe's Government, whether *Parceque Bourbon* or *Quoique Bourbon*, and as such is valuable. It is curious too, to find a staunch friend of the existing government, who may be said to have been even intimate with the younger members of the royal family, speaking of the Prime Minister with the detestation which these letters again and again express for Thiers.

In a letter of the 19th November, 1840, the writer describes at great length the recent opening of the Chamber by the King. She enlarges on the intensity of the anxiety felt for the tenor of the King's speech, which was supposed to be the announcement of war or peace; and describes the deep emotion, with which Louis Philippe, declaring his hope that peace might yet be preserved, called upon the nation to assist him in the effort to maintain it; and expresses the scorn and loathing with which she overheard one republican deputy say to another as the King spoke, "*Voyez donc ce Robert Macaire, comme il fait semblant d'avoir du cœur!*"

A letter of the 14th March, 1842, is written in better spirits and a lighter tone. Speaking of the prevalent hostile feeling towards England the writer wishes that her countrymen would remember Lamartine's observation that "*ce patriotisme coûte peu! Il suffit d'ignorer, d'injurier et de haïr.*" She tells her correspondent that "if Lord Cowley has much to do to establish the exact line between Lord Aberdeen's *observations* and *objections*, Lady Cowley has no less difficulty in keeping a nice balance between dignity and popularity," as "the Embassy is besieged by all sets and all parties; the tag and rag, because pushing is a part of their nature; the *juste milieu* [how the very phrase recalls a whole forgotten world!] because they consider the English Embassy as their property; the noble Faubourg because they are tired of

sulking, and would not object to treating Lady Cowley as they treated Colonel Thorn,[1] viz., establishing their quarters at the 'Cowley Arms,' as they did at the 'Thorn's Head,' and inviting their friends on the recognised principle, '*C'est moi qui invite, et Monsieur qui paie.*'"

Then follows an account of a fancy *bal monstre* at the Tuileries, which might have turned out, says the writer, to deserve that title in another sense. It was believed that a plot had been formed for the assassination of the King, at the moment, when, according to his invariable custom, he took his stand at the door of the supper-room to receive the ladies there. Four thousand five hundred tickets had been issued and a certain number of these, still blank, had disappeared. That was certain. And it was also certain that the King did not go to the door of the supper-room as usual. But the writer remarks that the tickets may have been stolen by, or for, people who could not obtain them legitimately. But the instantly conceived suspicion of a plot is illustrative of the conditions of feeling and opinions in Paris at the time.

"For my part," continues Mademoiselle D'Henin, "I never enjoyed a ball so much; perhaps because I did not expect to be amused; perhaps because all the royal family, the Jockey Club, and the

[1] Colonel Thorn was an American of fabulous wealth, who was for a season or two very notorious in Paris. He was the hero of the often-told story of the two drives to Longchamps the same day; first with one gorgeous equipment of *liveries*, and a second time with other and more resplendently clothed retainers.

fastidious Frenchwomen congratulated me upon my toilet, and voted it one of the handsomest there. They *said* the most becoming (but that was *de l'eau bénite de Cour*); perhaps it was because the Dukes of Orleans, Nemours, and Aumale, who never dance, and did so very little that evening, all three honoured me with a quadrille. You see I expose to you all the very linings of my heart. I dissect it and exhibit all the vanity it contains. But you will excuse me when I tell you of a compliment that might have turned a wiser head than mine. The fame of my huntress's costume (Mademoiselle D'Henin was in those days the very *beau-idéal* of a Diana!) was such that it reached the ears of the wife of our butcher, who sent to beg that I would lend it to her to copy, as she was going to a fancy ball!"

A letter of the 8th of August, 1842, written from Fulham Palace, contains some interesting notices of the grief and desolation caused by the sad death of the Duke of Orleans.

"Was there ever a more afflicting calamity!" she writes. "When last I wrote his name in a letter to you, it was to describe him as the admired of all beholders, the hero of the *fête*, the pride and honour of France, and now what remains of him is in his grave! The affliction of his family baffles all description. I receive the most touching accounts from Paris. Some ladies about the Court write to me that nothing can equal their grief. As long as the coffin remained in the chapel at Neuilly, the

members of the family were incessantly kneeling by the side of it, praying and weeping. The King so far mastered his feelings, that whenever he had official duties to perform, he was sufficiently composed to perform *son métier de Roi.* But when the painful task was done he would rush to the chapel, and weep over the dead body of his son, till the whole palace rang with his cries and lamentations. When the body was removed from Neuilly to Notre Dame, the scene at Neuilly was truly heartrending. My father has seen the King and the Princes several times since the catastrophe, and he says it has done the work of years on their personal appearance. The Duc de Nemours has neither eaten nor slept since his brother died, and looks as if walking out of his grave. Mamma wrote him a few lines of condolence, which he answered by a most affecting note. Papa was summoned to attend the King to the House, as *Grand Officier*, and says he never witnessed such a scene. Even the opposition shed their crocodile tears. Placed immediately near the King on the steps of the throne, he saw the struggle between kingly decorum and fatherly affliction. Nature had the victory. Three times the King attempted to speak, three times he was obliged to stop, and at last burst into a flood of tears. The contagion gained all around him. And it was only interrupted by sobs that he could proceed. And it is in the face of this despair, when the body of the prince is scarcely cold, that that horrid Thiers and his associates begin afresh their infernal manœuvres!"

A letter of the 3rd April, 1842, contains among a quantity of the gossip of the day an odd story, which, the writer says, "is putting Rome in a ferment, and the clergy in raptures." I think I remember that it made a considerable stir in ecclesiastic circles at the time. A certain M. Ratisbonne, a Jew, it seems entered a church in Rome (the writer does not say so, but if I remember rightly, it was the "Gesu"), with a friend, a M. de Bussières, who had some business to transact in the sacristy. The Jew, who professed complete infidelity, meantime was looking at the pictures. But M. de Bussières, when his business was done, found him prostrate on the pavement in front of a picture of the Madonna. The Jew on coming to himself declared that the Virgin had stepped from her frame, and addressed him, with the result, as he said, that having fallen to the ground an infidel, he rose a convinced Christian! Mademoiselle D'Henin writes in a tone which indicates small belief in the miracle, but seems to accept as certain the further facts, that the convert gave all he possessed to the Church and became a monk.

I have recently—even while transcribing these extracts from her letters—heard of the death, within the last few years, of the writer of them. She died in England, I am told, and unmarried. Her sympathies and affections were always strongly turned to her mother's country, as indeed may be in some degree inferred from even those passages of her letters which have been given. And I can

well conceive that the events which, each more disastrous than its predecessor, followed in France shortly after the date of the last of them, may have rendered, especially after the death of her parents, a life in France distasteful to her. But I, and, I think, my mother also, had entirely lost sight of her for very many years. Had I imagined that she was living in England, I should undoubtedly have endeavoured to see her.

I have known many women, denizens of *le grand monde*, who have adorned it with equally brilliant talents, equally captivating beauty, equally sparkling wit and vivacity of intelligence. And I have known many, denizens of the studious and the book world, gifted with larger powers of intellect, and more richly dowered with the results of thought and study. But I do not think that I ever met with one who possessed in so large a degree the choice product resulting from conversance with both these worlds. She was in truth a very brilliant creature.

Madame D'Henin I remember made us laugh heartily one evening by telling us the following anecdote. At one of those remarkable *omnium-gatherum* receptions at the Tuileries, of which I have spoken in a former chapter, she heard an American lady, to whom Louis Philippe was talking of his American recollections and of various persons he had known there, say to him, "Oh, sire, they all retain the most lively recollections of your majesty's sojourn among them, *and wish nothing more than that you should return among them again!*" The Duke

of Orleans, who was standing behind the King, fairly burst into a guffaw.

There was a story current in Rome, in the days of Pius the Ninth, which may be coupled with this as a good *pendant*. His Holiness, when he had occupied the papal throne for a period considerably exceeding the legendary twenty-five years of St. Peter, was one day very affably asking an Englishman, who had been presented to him, whether he had seen everything in Rome most calculated to interest a stranger, and was answered; "Yes indeed, your Holiness, I think almost everything, except one which I confess I have been particularly anxious to witness—a conclave!"

Here are a few jottings at random from my diary, which may still have some little interest.

"Madame Le Roi, a daughter of General Hoche, told me (22nd January, 1840), that as she was driving on the boulevard a day or two ago, a sou piece was thrown with great violence at the window of her carriage, smashing it to pieces. This, she said, was because her family arms were emblazoned on the panel. Most of the carriages in Paris, she said, had no arms on them for fear of similar attacks."

Then we were active frequenters of the theatres. We go, I find, to the Français, to see Mars, then sixty years old, in *Les Dehors Trompeurs* and in the *Fausses Confidences;* to the opera to hear *Robert le Diable* and *Lucia di Lammermuir*, with Persiani, Tamburini, and Rubini; and the following night to the Français again, to see Rachel in *Cinna.*

I thought her personally, I observe, very attractive. But that, and sundry other subsequent experiences, left me with the impression that she was truly very powerful in the representation of scorn, indignation, hatred, and all the sterner and less amiable passions of the soul, but failed painfully when her *rôle* required the exhibition of tenderness or any of the gentler emotions. These were my impressions when she was young and I was comparatively so. But when, many years afterwards, I saw her repeatedly in Italy, they were not, I think, much modified.

The frequent occasions on which subsequently I saw Ristori produced an impression on me very much the reverse. I remember thinking Ristori's "Mirra" too good, so terribly true as to be almost too painful for the theatre. I thought Rachel's "Marie Stuart" upon the whole her finest performance, though "Adrienne" ran it hard.

Persiani, I note, supported by Lablache and Rubini, had a most triumphant reception in *Inez de Castro*, while Albertazzi was very coldly received in *Blanche de Castille*. Grisi in *Norma* was "superb." "Persiani and P. Garcia sang a duet from *Tancredi;* it was divine! I think I like Garcia's voice better than any of them. Nor could I think her ugly, as it is the fashion to call her, though it must be admitted that her mouth and teeth are alarming."

Then there were brilliant receptions at the English Embassy (Lord Granville) and at the

Austrian Embassy (Comte d'Appony). My diary remarks that stars and gold lace and ribbons of all the Orders in Christendom were more abundant at the latter, but female beauty at the former. I remember much admiring that of Lady Honoria Cadogan, and that of a very remarkably lovely Visconti girl, a younger sister of the Princess Belgiojoso. But despite this perfect beauty, my diary notes, that it was "curious to observe the unmistakable superiority as a human being of the young English patrician." I remember that the "sit-down" suppers at the Austrian Embassy—a separate little table for every two, three, or four guests—were remarked on as a novelty (and applauded) by the Parisians.

Then at Miss Clarke's (afterwards Madame Mohl) I find Fauriel, "the first Provençal scholar in Europe," delightful, and am disgusted with Merimée, because he manifested self-sufficiency, as it seemed to my youthful criticism, by pooh-poohing the probability of the temple at Lanleff in Brittany having been aught else than a church of the Templars.

Then Arago reads an *Eloge* on "old Ampère," of which I only remark that it lasted two hours and a half. Then there was a dinner at Dr. Gilchrist's whose widow our old friend Pepe, who for many years had always called her "Madame Ghee-cree," subsequently married. My notes, written the same evening, remind me that "I did not much like the radical old Doctor (his wife was

an old acquaintance, but I had never seen him before); he is eighty, and ought to know better. Old Nymzevitch (I am not sure of the spelling), the ex-Chancellor of Poland, dined with us. He is eighty-four. When he said that he had conversed with the Duc de Richelieu, I started as if he had announced himself as the Wandering Jew. But, in fact, he had had, when a young man, an interview with the Duc, then ninety. He was, Nymzevitch told me, dreadfully emaciated, but dressed very splendidly in a purple coat all bedizened with silver lace. He received me, said the old ex-Chancellor, with much affable dignity."

Then comes a breakfast with Pepe, at which I met the President Thibeaudeau, "a grey old man who makes a point of saying rude, coarse, and disagreeable things, which his friends call dry humour. He found fault with everything at the breakfast table."

Then a visit to the Chamber (where I heard Soult, Dupin, and Teste speak, and thought it "a terrible bear-garden)" is followed by attendance at a sermon by Athanase Coquerel, the Protestant preacher whose reputation in the Parisian *beau monde* was great in those days. He was, says my diary, "exceedingly eloquent, but I did not like his sermon;" for which dislike my notes proceed to give the reasons, which I spare the, I hope grateful, reader. Then I went to hear Bishop Luscombe at the Ambassador's chapel, and listened to "a very stupid sermon." I seem, somewhat to my surprise

as I read the records of it, to have had a pronounced taste for sermons in those days, which I fear I have somehow outgrown. But then I have been very deaf during my later decades.

Bishop Luscombe may perhaps however be made more amusing to the reader than he was to me in the Embassy chapel by the following fragment of his experience. The Bishop arrived one day at Paddington, and could not find his luggage. He called a porter to find it for him, telling him the name to be read on the articles. The man, very busy with other people, answered hurriedly, "You must go to hell for your luggage." Now, Luscombe, who was a somewhat pompous and very *bishopy* man, was dreadfully shocked, and felt, as he said, as if the porter had struck him in the face. In extreme indignation he demanded where he could speak with any of the authorities, and was told that "the Board" was then sitting up stairs. So to the boardroom the Bishop went straightway, and announcing himself, made his complaint. The chairman, professing his regret that such offence should have been given, said he feared the man must have been drunk, but that he should be immediately summoned to give an account of his conduct. So the porter in great trepidation appeared in a few minutes before the august tribunal of "the Board."

"Well, sir," said he in reply to the chairman's indignant questioning, "what could I do? I was werry busy at the time. So when the gentleman

says as his name was Luscombe, I could do no better than tell him to go to h'ell for his luggage, and he'd have found it there all right!"

"Oh! I see," said the chairman, "it is a case of misplaced aspirate! We have spaces on the wall marked with the letters of the alphabet, and you would have found your luggage at the letter L. You will see that the man meant no offence. I am sorry you should have been so scandalised, but though we succeed, I hope, in making our porters civil to our customers, it would be hopeless, I fear, to attempt to make them say L correctly." *Solvuntur risu tabulæ.*

I find chronicled a long talk with Mohl one evening at Madame Récamier's. The room was very full of notable people of all sorts, and the tide of chattering was running very strong. "How can anything last long in France?" said he, in reply to my having said (in answer to his assertion that Cousin's philosophy had gone by) that it had been somewhat short-lived. "Reputations are made and pass away. It is impossible that they should endure. It is in such places as this that they are destroyed. The friction is prodigious!"

We then began to talk of the state of religion in France. He said that among a large set, religion was now *à la mode*. But he did not suppose that many of the fine folks who *patronised* it had much belief in it. The clergy of France were, he said, almost invariably very illiterate. Guizot, I remembered, calls them in his *History of Civilisation*,

doctes et erudits, but I abstained from quoting him. Mohl went on to tell me a story of a newspaper that had been about to be established, called *Le Democrat.* The shareholders met, when it appeared that one party wished to make it a Roman Catholic, and the other an atheist organ. Whereupon the existence of God was put to the vote and carried by a majority of one, at which the atheist party were so disgusted that they seceded in a body.

I got to like Mohl much, and had more conversation, I think, with him than with any other of the numerous men of note with whom I became more or less acquainted. On another occasion, when I found him in his cabinet, walled up as usual among his books, our talk fell on his great work, the edition of the oriental MSS. in the *Bibliothèque Royale*, which was to be completed in ten folio volumes, the first of which, just out, he was showing me. He complained of the extreme slowness of the Government presses in getting on with the work. This he attributed to the absurd costliness, as he considered it, of the style in which the work was brought out. The cost of producing that first volume he told me had been over 1,600*l.* sterling. It was to be sold at a little less than a hundred francs. Something was said (by me, I think) of the possibility of obtaining assistance from the King, who was generally supposed to be immensely wealthy. Mohl said that he did not believe Louis Philippe to be nearly so rich a man as he was

supposed to be. He had spent, he said, enormous sums on the châteaux he had restored, and was affirmed by those who had the means of knowing the fact, to be at that time twelve millions of francs in debt.

My liking for Mohl seems to have been fully justified by the estimation he was generally held in. I find in a recently published volume by Kathleen O'Meara on the life of my old friend, Miss Clarke, who afterwards became his wife, the following passage quoted from Sainte-Beuve, who describes him as "a man who was the very embodiment of learning and of inquiry, an oriental *savant*—more than a *savant*—a sage, with a mind clear, loyal, and vast; a German mind passed through an English filter, a cloudless, unruffled mirror, open and limpid; of pure and frank morality; early disenchanted with all things; with a grain of irony devoid of all bitterness, the laugh of a child under a bald head; a Goethe-like intelligence, but free from all prejudice." "A charming and *spirituelle* Frenchwoman," Miss O'Meara goes on to say, "said of Julius Mohl that Nature in forming his character had skimmed the cream of the three nationalities to which he belonged by birth, by adoption and by marriage, making him deep as a German, *spirituel* as a Frenchman, and loyal as an Englishman."

I may insert here the following short note from Madame Mohl, because the manner of it is very characteristic of her. It is, as was usual with her, undated.

"My dear Mr. Trollope,—By accident I have just learned that you are in London. If I could see you and talk over my dear old friend (Madame Récamier) I should be so much obliged and so glad. I live 68 Oxford Terrace, Hyde Park. If you would write me a note to say when I should be at home for the purpose. But if you can't, I am generally, not always, found after four. But if you could come on the 10th or 12th after nine we have a party. I am living at Mrs. Schwabe's just now till 16th this month. Pray write me a note, even if you can't come.

"Yours ever,

"Mary Mohl."

All the capital letters in the above transcript, except those in her name are mine, she uses none. The note is written in headlong hurry.

Mignet, whom I met at the house of Thiers, I liked too, but Mohl was my favourite.

It was all very amusing, with as much excitement and interest of all kinds crammed into a few weeks as might have lasted one for a twelvemonth. And I liked it better than teaching Latin to the youth of Birmingham. But it would seem that there was something that I liked better still. For on March 30th, leaving my mother in the full swing of the Parisian gaieties, I bade adieu to them all and once again "took to the road," bound on an excursion through Central France.

CHAPTER IV.

My journey through central France took me by Chartres, Orleans, down the Loire to Nantes, then through La Vendée to Fontenay, Niort, Poitiers, Saintes, Rochefort, La Rochelle, Bordeaux, Angouleme, Limoges, and thence back to Paris. On looking at the book for the first time since I read the proof-sheets I find it amusing. The fault of it, as an account of the district traversed, is, that it treats of the localities described on a scale that would have needed twenty volumes, instead of two, to complete the story of my tour in the same proportion. I do not remember that any of my critics noted this fault. Perhaps they feared that on the first suggestion of such an idea I should have set about mending the difficulty by the production of a score of other volumes on the subject! I could easily have done so. I was in no danger of incurring the anathema launched by Sterne—I think it was Sterne—against the man who went from Dan to Beersheba and found all barren. I found matter of interest everywhere, and could have gone on doing so, as it seemed to me in those days, for ever.

The part of France I visited is not much be-travelled by Englishmen, and the general idea is that it is not an interesting section of the country. I thought, and still think, otherwise. My notion is, that if a line were drawn through France from Calais to the centre of the Pyrenean chain, by far the greater part of the prettiest country and most interesting populations, as well as places, would be found to the westward of it. I do not think that my bill of fare excited any great interest in the reading world. But I suppose that I contrived to interest a portion of it; for the book was fairly successful.

I wrote a book in many respects of the same kind many years subsequently, giving an account of a journey through certain little-visited districts of central Italy, under the title of a *Lenten Journey*. It is not, I think, so good a book as my French journeys furnished, mainly to my mind because it was in one small volume instead of two big ones, and both for want of space and want of time was done hurriedly and too compendiously. The true motto for the writer of such a book is *nihil a me alienum puto*, whether *humanum* or otherwise. My own opinion is, to make a perfectly clean breast of it, that I could now write a fairly amusing book on a journey from Tyburn turnpike to Stoke Pogis. But then such books should be addressed to readers who are not in such a tearing hurry as the unhappy world is in these latter days.

It would seem that I found my two octavo

volumes did not afford me nearly enough space to say my say respecting the country traversed, for they are brought to an end somewhat abruptly by a hurried return from Limoges to Paris; whereas my ramble was much more extended, including both the upper and lower provinces of Auvergne and the whole of the Bourbonnais. My voluminous notes of the whole of these wanderings are now before me. But I will let my readers off easy, recording only that I walked from Murat to St. Flour, a distance of fifteen miles, in five minutes under three hours. Not bad! My diary notes that it was frequently very difficult to find my way in walking about Auvergne, from the paucity of people I could find who could speak French, the *langue du pays* being as unintelligible as Choctaw. This would hardly be the case now.

I don't know whether a knot of leading tradesmen at Bordeaux could now be found to talk, as did such a party with whom I got into conversation in that year, 1840. It was explained to me that England, as was well known, had liberated her slaves in the West Indies perfectly well knowing that the colonies would be absolutely ruined by the measure, but expecting to be amply compensated by the ruin of the French colonies, which would result from the example, and the consequent extension of trade with the East Indies, from which France would be compelled to purchase all the articles her own colonies now supplied her with. One of these individuals told me and the rest of his audience, that he had the

means of *knowing* that the interest of the English national debt was paid every year by fresh borrowing, and that bankruptcy and absolute smash must occur within a few years. "Ah!" said a much older, grey-headed man, who had been listening sitting with his hands reposing on his walking-stick before him, and who spoke with a sort of patient, long-expecting hope and a deep sigh, "ah! we have been looking for that many a year; but I am beginning to doubt whether I shall live to see it." My assurances that matters were not altogether so bad as they supposed in England of course met with little credence. Still, they listened to me, and did not show angry signs of a consciousness that I was audaciously befooling them, till the talk having veered to London, I ventured to assure them that London was not surrounded by any *octroi* boundary, and that no impost of that nature was levied there.[1] Then in truth I might as well have assured them that London streets were literally paved with gold.

On the 30th of May, 1840, I returned with my mother from Paris to her house in York Street. Life had been very pleasant there to her I believe, and certainly to me during those periods of it which my inborn love of rambling allowed me to pass there. But in the following June it was determined that the house in York Street should be given up. Probably the *causa causans* of this

[1] It may possibly be necessary to tell untravelled Englishmen that the *octroi*, universal on the Continent, is an impost levied on all articles of consumption at the gates of a town.

determination was the fact of my sister's removal to far Penrith. But I think too, that there was a certain unavowed feeling, that we had eaten up London, and should enjoy a move to new pastures.

I remember well a certain morning in York Street when we—my mother and I—held a solemn audit of accounts. It was found that during her residence in York Street she had spent a good deal more than she had supposed. She had entertained a good deal, giving frequent "little dinners." But dinners, however little, are apt in London to leave tradesmen's bills not altogether small in proportion to their littleness. "The fact is," said my mother, "that potatoes have been quite exceptionally dear." For a very long series of years she never heard the last of those exceptional potatoes. But despite the alarming deficit caused by those unfortunate vegetables, I do not think the abandonment of the establishment in York Street was caused by financial considerations. She was earning in those years large sums of money—quite as large as any she had been spending—and might have continued in London had she been so minded.

No doubt I had much to do with the determination we came to. But for my part, if it had at that time been proposed to me, that our establishment should be reduced to a couple of trunks, and all our worldly possessions to the contents of them, with an opening vista of carriages, diligences, and ships *ad libitum* in prospect, I should have jumped at the

idea. A caravan, which in addition to shirts and stockings could have carried about one's books and writing tackle would have seemed the *summum bonum* of human felicity.

So we turned our backs on London without a thought of regret and once again "took the road;" but this time separately, my mother going to my sister at Penrith and I to pass the summer months in wanderings in Picardy, Lorraine, and French Flanders, and the ensuing winter in Paris.

I hardly know which was the pleasanter time. By this time I was no stranger to Paris, and had many friends there. It was my first experiment of living there as a bachelor, as I was going to say, but I mean "on my own hook," and left altogether to my own devices. I found of course that my then experiences differed considerably from those acquired when living *en famille*. But I am disposed to think that the tolerably intimate knowledge I flatter myself I possessed of the Paris and Parisians of Louis Philippe's time was mainly the result of this second residence. I remember among a host of things indicating the extent of the difference between those days and these, that I lived in a very good apartment, *au troisième*, in one of the streets immediately behind the best part of the Rue de Rivoli for one hundred francs a month! This price included all service (save of course a tip to the porter), and the preparation of my coffee for breakfast if I needed it. For dinner, or any other meal, I had to go out.

"Society" lived in Paris in those days—not unreasonably as the result soon showed—in perpetual fear of being knocked all to pieces by an outbreak of revolution, though of course nobody said so. But I lived mainly (though not entirely) among the *bien pensants* people, who looked on all anti-governmental manifestations with horror. Perhaps the restless discontent which destroyed Louis Philippe's government is the most disheartening circumstance in the whole course of recent French history. That the rule of Charles Dix should have occasioned revolt may be regrettable, but is not a matter for surprise. But that of Louis Philippe was not a stagnant or retrogressive *régime.* "*La carrière*" was very undeniably open to talent and merit of every description. Material well-being was on the increase. And the door was not shut against any political change which even very advanced Liberalism, of the kind consistent with order, might have aspired to. But the Liberalism which moved France was not of that kind.

One of my most charming friends of those days, Rosa Stewart, who afterwards became and was well known to literature as Madame Blaze de Bury, was both too clever and too shrewd an observer, as well as, to me at least, too frank to pretend any of the assurance which was then *de mode.* She saw what was coming, and was fully persuaded that it must come. I hope that her eye may rest on this testimony to her perspicacity, though I know not whether she still graces this planet with her very

pleasing presence. For as, alas! in so many scores of other instances, our lives have drifted apart, and it is many years since I have heard of her.

One excursion I specially remember in connection with that autumn was partly, I think, a pedestrian one, to Amiens and Beauvais, made in company with the W—— A——, of whom my brother speaks in his autobiography; which I mention chiefly for the sake of recording my testimony to the exactitude of his description of that very singular individual. If it had not been for the continual carefulness necessitated by the difficulty of avoiding all cause of quarrel, I should say that he was about the pleasantest travelling companion I have ever known.

In the beginning of April, 1841, after a little episode of spring wandering in the Tyrol and Bavaria (in the course of which I met my mother at the château of her very old friend the Baroness de Zandt, who has been mentioned before, and was now living somewhat solitarily in her huge house in its huge park near Bamberg), my mother and I started for Italy. Neither of us had at that time conceived the idea of making a home there. The object of the journey, which had been long contemplated by my mother, was the writing of a book on Italy, as she had already done on Paris and on Vienna.

Our journey was a prosperous one in all respects, and our flying visit to Italy was very pleasant. My mother's book was duly written, and published by

Mr. Bentley in 1842. But the *Visit to Italy*, as the work was entitled (with justly less pretence than the titles of either of its predecessors had put forward), was in truth all too short. And I find that almost all of the huge mass of varied recollections which are connected in my mind with Italy and Italian people and things belong to my second "visit" of nearly half a century's duration!

We made, however, several pleasant acquaintances and some fast friends, principally at Florence, and thus paved the way, although little intending it at the time, for our return thither.

Our visit was rendered shorter than it would probably otherwise have been by my mother's strong desire to be with my sister, who was expecting the birth of her first child at Penrith. And for this purpose we left Rome in February, 1842, in very severe weather. We crossed the Mont Cenis in sledges—which to me was a very acceptable experience, but to my mother was one, which nothing could have induced her to face, save the determination not to fail her child at her need.

How well I remember hearing as I sat in the *banquette* of the diligence which was just leaving Susa for its climb up the mountain amid the snow, then rapidly falling, the driver of the descending diligence, which had accomplished its work and was just about entering the haven of Susa, sing out to our driver—"*Vous allez vous amuser joliment là haut, croyez moi!*"

We did not, however, change the diligence for

the sledges till we came to the descent on the northern side. But as we made our slow way to the top our vehicle was supported from time to time on either side by twelve strapping fellows, who put their shoulders to it.

I appreciated during that journey, though I was glad to see the mountain in its winter dress, the recommendation not to let your flight be in the winter.

CHAPTER V.

I ACCOMPANIED my mother to Penrith, and forthwith devoted myself heart and body to the preparation of our new house, and the beautifying of the very pretty paddock in which it was situated. I put in some hundreds of trees and shrubs with my own hands, which prospered marvellously, and have become, I have been told, most luxuriant shrubberies. I was bent on building a cloistered walk along the entire top of the field, which would have afforded a charming ambulatory sheltered from the north winds and from the rain, and would have commanded the most lovely views, while the pillars supporting the roof would have presented admirable places for a world of flowering climbing plants. And doubtless I should have achieved it, had we remained there. But it would have run into too much money to be undertaken immediately,—fortunately; for, inasmuch as there was nothing of the sort in all that country side, no human being would have given a stiver more for the house when it came to be sold, and the next owner would probably have pulled it

down. There was no authority for such a thing. Had it been suffered to remain it would probably have been called "Trollope's folly!"

Subsequently, but not immediately after we left it, the place—oddly enough I forget the name we gave it—became the property and the residence of my brother-in-law.

Of my life at Penrith I need add nothing to the jottings I have already placed before the reader on the occasion of my first visit to that place.

My brother, already a very different man from what he had been in London, came from his Irish district to visit us there; and I returned with him to Ireland, to his head-quarters at Banagher on the Shannon. Neither of this journey need I say much. For to all who know anything of Ireland at the present day—and who does not? worse luck!—anything I might write would seem as *nihil ad rem*, as if I were writing of an island in the Pacific. I remember a very vivid impression that occurred to me on first landing at Kingstown, and accompanied me during the whole of my stay in the island, to the effect, that the striking differences in everything that fell under my observation from what I had left behind me at Holyhead, were fully as great as any that had excited my interest when first landing in France.

One of my first visits was to my brother's chief. He was a master of foxhounds and hunted the country. And I well remember my astonishment, when the door of this gentleman's residence was

opened to me by an extremely dirty and slatternly bare-footed and bare-legged girl. I found him to be a very friendly and hospitable good fellow, and his wife and her sister very pleasant women. I found too that my brother stood high in his good graces by virtue of simply having taken the whole work and affairs of the postal district on his own shoulders. The rejected of St. Martin's-le-Grand was already a very valuable and capable officer.

My brother gave me the choice of a run to the Killeries, or to Killarney. We could not manage both. I chose the former, and a most enjoyable trip we had. He could not leave his work to go with me, but was to join me subsequently, I forget where, in the west. Meantime he gave me a letter to a bachelor friend of his at Clifden. This gentleman immediately asked me to dinner, and he and I dined *tête-à-tête*. Nevertheless, he thought it necessary to apologise for the appearance of a very fine John Dory on the table, saying, that he had been himself to the market to get a turbot for me, but that he had been asked half-a-crown for a not very large one, and really he could not give such absurd prices as that!

Anthony duly joined me as proposed, and we had a grand walk over the mountains above the Killeries. I don't forget and never shall forget—nor did Anthony ever forget; alas! that we shall never more talk over that day again—the truly grand spectacular changes from dark thick enveloping cloud to brilliant sunshine, suddenly revealing all the

mountains and the wonderful colouring of the intertwining sea beneath them, and then back to cloud and mist and drifting sleet again. It was a glorious walk. We returned wet to the skin to "Joyce's Inn," and dined on roast goose and whisky punch, wrapped in our blankets like Roman senators!

One other scene I must recall. The reader will hardly believe that it occurred in Ireland. There was an election of a member for I forget what county or borough, and my brother and I went to the hustings—the only time I ever was at an election in Her Majesty's dominions. What were the party feelings, or the party colours, I utterly forget. It was merely for the fun of the thing that we went there. The fun indeed was fast and furious. The whole scene on the hustings, as well as around them, seemed to me one seething mass of senseless but good-humoured hustling and confusion. Suddenly in the midst of the uproar an ominous cracking was heard, and in the next minute the hustings swayed and came down with a crash, heaping together in a confused mass all the two or three hundreds of human beings who were on the huge platform. Some few were badly hurt. But my brother and I being young and active, and tolerably stout fellows, soon extricated ourselves, regained our legs, and found that we were none the worse. Then we began to look to our neighbours. And the first who came to hand was a priest, a little man, who was lying with two or three fellows on the top of him, horribly frightened and roaring piteously for help. So

Anthony took hold of one of his arms and I of the other, and by main force dragged him from under the superincumbent mass of humanity. When we got him on his legs his gratitude was unbounded. "Tell me your names," he shouted, "that I'll pray for ye!" We told him laughingly that we were afraid it was no use, for we were heretics. "Tell me your names," he shouted again, "that I'll pray for ye all the more!"

I wonder whether he ever did! He certainly was very much in earnest while the fright was on him.

Not very long after my return from this Irish trip, we finally left Penrith on the 3rd of April, 1843; and I trust that the nymph of the holy well, whose spring we had disturbed, was appeased.

My mother and I had now "the world before us where to choose." She had work in hand, and more in perspective. I also had some in hand and very much more in perspective, but it was work of a nature that might be done in one place as well as another. So when "Carlton Hill" (all of a sudden the name comes back to my memory!) was sold, we literally stood with no *impedimenta* of any sort save our trunks, and absolutely free to turn our faces in whatsoever direction we pleased.

What we did in the first instance was to turn them to the house of our old and well-beloved cousin, Fanny Bent, at Exeter. There after a few days we persuaded her to accompany us to Ilfracombe, where we spent some very enjoyable summer weeks. What I remember chiefly in connection with that pleasant

time, was idling rambles over the rocks and the Capstone Hill, in company with Mrs. Coker and her sister Miss Aubrey, the daughters of that Major A. who needs to the whist-playing world no further commemoration. The former of them was the wife and mother of Wykehamists (founder's kin), and both were very charming women. Ilfracombe was in those days an unpretending sort of fishing village. There was no huge "Ilfracombe Hotel," and the Capstone Hill was not strewed with whitey-brown biscuit bags and the fragments of bottles, nor continually vocal with nigger minstrels and ranting preachers. The "Royal Clarence" did exist in the little town, whether under that name or not, I forget. But I can testify from experience, acquired some forty years afterwards, that Mr. and Mrs. Clemow now keep there one of the best inns of its class, that I, no incompetent expert in such matters, know in all England.

Then, when the autumn days began to draw in, we returned to Exeter, and many a long consultation was held by my mother and I, sallying forth from Fanny Bent's hospitable house for a *tête-à-tête* stroll on Northernhay, on the question of "What next?"

It turned out to be a more momentous question than we either of us imagined it to be at the time; for the decision of it involved the shape and form of the entire future life of one of us, and still more important modification of the future life of the other. Dresden was talked of. Rome was considered. Paris was thought of. Venice was discussed. No one

of them was proposed as a future permanent home. Finally Florence came on the *tapis*. We had liked it much, and had formed some much valued friendships there. It was supposed to be economical as a place to live in, which was one main point. For our plan was to make for ourselves for two or three years a home and way of living sufficiently cheap to admit of combining with it large plans of summer travel. And eventually Florence was fixed on.

As for my mother, it turned out that she was then selecting her last and final home—though the end was not, thank God, for many a long year yet. As for me, the decision arrived at during those walks on Exeter Northernhay, was more momentous still. For I was choosing the road that led not only to my home for the next half century nearly, but to two marriages, both of them so happy in all respects as rarely to have fallen to the lot of one and the same man!

How little we either of us, my mother and I, saw into the future—beyond a few immediate inches before our noses! Truly *prudens futuri temporis exitum caliginosâ nocte premit Deus!* And when I hear talk of "conduct making fate," I often think—humbly and gratefully, I trust; marvelling, certainly, —how far it could have *à priori* seemed probable, that the conduct of a man who, without either *æs in presenti*, or any very visible prospect of *æs in futuro*, turns aside from all the beaten paths of professional industry should have led him to a long life of happiness and content, hardly to be surpassed,

and, I should fear, rarely equalled. *Deus nobis hæc otia fecit!—Deus*, by the intromission of one rarely good mother, and two rarely good, and I may add rarely gifted, wives!

Not that I would have the reader translate "*otia*" by idleness. I have written enough to show that my life hitherto had been a full and active one. And it continued in Italy to be an industrious one. Translate the word rather into "independence." For I worked at work that I liked, and did no taskwork. Nevertheless, I would not wish to be an evil exemplar, *vitiis imitabile*, and I don't recommend you, dear boys, to do as I did. I have been quite abnormally fortunate.

Well, we thought that we were casting the die of fate on a very subordinate matter, while, lo! it was cast for us by the Supernal Powers after a more far-reaching and over-ruling fashion.

So on the 2nd of September, 1843, we turned our faces southwards and left London for Florence.

We became immediately on arriving in Firenze la gentile (after a little tour in Savoy, introduced as an interlude after our locomotive rambling fashion) the guests of Lady Bulwer, who then inhabited in the Palazzo Passerini an apartment far larger than she needed, till we could find a lodging for ourselves.

We had become acquainted with Lady Bulwer in Paris, and a considerable intimacy arose between her and my mother, whose nature was especially calculated to sympathise with the good qualities

which Lady Bulwer unquestionably possessed in a high degree. She was brilliant, witty, generous, kind, joyous, good-natured, and very handsome. But she was wholly governed by impulse and unreasoning prejudice; though good-natured, was not always good-humoured; was totally devoid of prudence or judgment, and absolutely incapable of estimating men aright. She used to think me, for instance, little short of an admirable Crichton!

Of course all the above rehearsed good qualities were, or were calculated to be, immediately perceived and appreciated, while the less pleasant specialties which accompanied them were of a kind to become more perceptible only in close intimacy. And while no intimacy ever lessened that regard of my mother and myself that had been won by the first, it was not long before we were both, my mother especially, vexed by exhibitions of the second.

As, for instance:—Lady Bulwer had for some days been complaining of feeling unwell, and was evidently suffering. My mother urged her to have some medical advice, whereupon she turned on her very angrily, while the tears started to her beautiful eyes, and said, "How *can* you tell me to do any such thing, when you know that I have not a guinea for the purpose?" (She was frequently wont to complain of her poverty.) But she had hardly got the words out of her mouth when the servant entered the room saying that the silversmith was at the door asking that the account which he laid on the table might be paid. The account (which Lady Bulwer

made no attempt to conceal, for concealment of anything was not at all in her line) was for a pair of small silver spurs and an ornamented silver collar which she had ordered a week or two previously for the *ceremonial knighting of her little dog Taffy!*

On another occasion a large party of us were to visit the Boboli Gardens. It was a very hot day, and we had to climb the hill to the upper part of the gardens, from whence the view over Florence and the Val d'Arno is a charming one. But the hill, as those who have been at Florence will not have forgotten, is not only an extremely steep, but a shadeless one. The broad path runs between two wide margins of turf, which are enclosed on either side by thick but not very high shrubberies. The party sorted themselves into couples, and the men addressed themselves to facilitating as best they might the not slightly fatiguing work before the ladies. It fell to my lot to give Lady Bulwer my arm. Before long we were the last and most lagging couple on the path. It was hard work, but I did my best, and flattered myself that my companion, despite the radical moisture which she was copiously losing, was in high good humour, as indeed she seemed to be, when suddenly, without a word of warning, she dashed from the path, threw herself prone among the bushes, and burst into an uncontrollable fit of sobs and weeping. I was horrified with amazement. What had I done, or what left undone? It was long before I could get a word out of her. At last she articulated amidst her

sobs, "It is TOO hot! It is cruel to bring one here!" Yes, it was *too* hot; but that was all. Fortunately I was not the cruel bringer. I consoled her to the best of my power, and induced her to wipe her eyes. I dabbled a handkerchief in a neighbouring fountain for her to wash her streaked face, and eventually I got her to the top of the hill, where all the others had long since arrived.

The incident was entirely characteristic of her. She was furiously angry with all things in heaven above and on the earth below because she was at the moment inconvenienced.

Here is the beginning of a letter from her of a date some months anterior to the Boboli adventure:

"Illustrissimo Signor Tommaso" (that was the usual style of her address to me), "as your book is just out you must feel quite *en train* for puffs of any description. Therefore I send you the best I have seen for a long while, *La Physiologie du Fumeur*. But even if you don't like it, *don't* put it in your pipe and smoke it. *Vide* Joseph Fume."

A little subsequently she writes: "Signor Tommaso, the only revenge I shall take for your lecture" (probably on the matter of some outrageous extravagance) "is not to call you *illustrissimo* and not to send you an illuminated postillion" (a previous letter having been ornamented with such a decoration at the top of the sheet), "but let you find your way to Venice in the dark as you can, and then and there, 'On the Rialto I will rate you,' and, being a man, you know there is no chance of my *over-rating* you."

The following passage from the same letter refers to some negotiations with which she had entrusted me relative to some illustrations she was bent on having in a forthcoming book she was about to publish :— "As for the immortal Cruikshank, tell him that I am sure the mighty genius which conceived Lord Bateman could not refuse to give any lady the *werry best*, and if he does I shall pass the rest of my life registering a similar *wow* to that of the fair Sophia, and exclaiming, 'I vish, George Cruikshank, as you vas mine.'"

The rest of the long, closely-written four-paged letter is an indiscriminate and bitter, though joking attack, upon the race of publishers. She calls Mr. Colburn an "embodied shiver," which will bring a smile to the lips of those—few, I fear—who remember the little man.

Here are some extracts from a still longer letter written to my mother much about the same time: "I hear Lady S—— has committed another novel, called *The Three Peers*, no doubt *l'un pire que l'autre!* . . . I have a great many kind messages to you from that very charming person Madame Récamier, who fully intends meeting you at Venice with Chateaubriand in October, for so she told me on Sunday. I met her at Miss Clarke's some time ago, and as I am a bad *pusher* I am happy to say she asked to be introduced to me, and was, thanks to you, my kind friend! She pressed me to go and see her, which I have done two or three times, and am going to do again at her amiable request on

Thursday. I think that her fault is that she flatters a little too much. And flattery to one whose ears have so long been excoriated by abuse does not sound safe. However, all is right when she speaks of you. And the point she most eulogised in you is that which I have heard many a servile coward who could never go and do likewise" [no indication is to be found either in this letter or elsewhere to whom she alludes], "select for the same purpose, namely, your straightforward, unflinching, courageous integrity. . . . Balzac is furious at having his new play suppressed by Thiers, in which Arnauld acted Louis Philippe, wig and all, to the life; but, as I said to M. Dupin, '*C'est tout naturel que M. Thiers ne permetterait à personne de jouer Louis Philippe que lui-même.*' . . . There is a wonderful pointer here that has been advertised for sale for twelve hundred francs. A friend of mine went to see him, and after mounting up to a little garret about the size of a chessboard, *au vingt-septième*, he interrogated the owner as to the dog's education and acquirements, to which the man replied, '*Pour ça, monsieur, c'est un chien parfait. Je lui ai tout appris moi-même dans ma chambre.*'[1] After this my friend did not sing 'Together let us range the fields!' . . . Last week I met Colonel Potter M'Queen, who was warm in his praises of you, and the great good your *Michael Armstrong*" (the factory story) "had done. . . . Last Thursday despatches

[1] "As for that, sir, the dog is perfect. I have myself taught him everything *in my own room!*"

arrived and Lord Granville had to start for London at a moment's notice. I was in hopes this beastly ministry were out! But no such luck! For they are a compound of glue, sticking-plaister, wax, and vice—the most adhesive of all known mixtures."

Before concluding my recollections of Rosina, Lady Lytton Bulwer, I think it right to say that I consider myself to have perfectly sufficient grounds for feeling certain that the whispers which were circulated in a cowardly and malignant fashion against the correctness of her conduct as a woman were wholly unfounded. Her failings and tendency to failings lay in a quite different direction. I knew perfectly well the person whose name was mentioned scandalously in connection with hers, and knew the whole history of the relationship that existed between them. The gentleman in question was for years Lady Bulwer's constant and steadfast friend. It is quite true that he would fain have been something more, but true also that his friendship survived the absolute rejection of all warmer sentiments by the object of it. It was almost a matter of course that such a woman as Lady Bulwer, living unprotected in the midst of such a society as that of Florence in those days, should be so slandered. And were it not that there were very few if any persons at the time, and I think certainly not one still left, able to speak upon the subject with such *connaissance de cause* as I can, I should not have alluded to it.

She was an admirably charming companion before the footlights of the world's stage—not so uniformly charming behind its scenes, for her unreasonableness always and her occasional violence were very difficult to deal with. But she was, as Dickens's poor Jo says in *Bleak House*, "werry good to me!"

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER some little time and trouble we found an apartment in the Palazzo Berti, in the ominously named Via dei Malcontenti. It was so called because it was at one time the road to the Florentine Tyburn. Our house was the one next to the east end of the church of Santa Croce. Our rooms looked on to a large garden, and were pleasant enough. We witnessed from our windows the building of the new steeple of Santa Croce, which was completed before we left the house.

It was built in great measure by an Englishman, a Mr. Sloane, a fervent Catholic, who was at that time one of the best-known figures in the English colony at Florence.

He was a large contributor to the recently completed façade of the Duomo in Florence, and to many other benevolent and pietistic good works. He had been tutor in the Russian Boutourlin family, and when acting in that capacity had been taken, by reason of his geological acquirements, to see some copper mines in the Volterra district, which the Grand Duke had conceded to a company under whose admi-

nistration they were going utterly to the bad. Sloane came, saw, and eventually conquered. In conjunction with Horace Hall, the then well known and popular partner in the bank of Signor Emanuele Fenzi (one of whose sons married an English wife, and is still my very good and forty years old friend), he obtained a new concession of the mines from the Grand Duke on very favourable terms, and by the time I made his acquaintance had become a wealthy man. I fancy the Halls, Horace and his much esteemed brother Alfred (who survived him many years, and was the father of a family, one of the most respected and popular of the English colony during the whole of my Florence life), subsequently considered themselves to have been shouldered out of the enterprise by a certain unhandsome treatment on the part of the fortunate tutor. What may have been the exact history of the matter I do not know. But I do know that Sloane always remained on very intimate terms with the Grand Duke, and was a power in the inmost circles of the ecclesiastic world.

He used to give great dinners on Friday, the principal object of which seemed to be to show how magnificent a feast could be given without infringing by a hair's breadth the rule of the Church. And admirably he succeeded in showing how entirely the spirit and intention of the Church in prescribing a fast could be made of none effect by a skilfully-managed observance of the letter of its law.

The only opportunity I ever had of conversing with

Cardinal Wiseman was in Casa Sloane. And what I chiefly remember of His Eminence was his evident annoyance at the ultra-demonstrative zeal of the female portion of the mixed Catholic and Protestant assembly, who *would* kneel and kiss his hand. A schoolmaster meeting boys in society, who, instantly on his appearance should begin unbuttoning their brace buttons behind, would hardly appreciate the recognition more gratefully.

Within a very few weeks of our establishment in Casa Berti my mother's home became, as usual, a centre of attraction and pleasant intercourse, and her weekly Friday receptions were always crowded. If I were to tell everything of what I remember in connection with those days, I should produce such a book as *non dî, non homines, non concessere columnæ*—a book such as neither publishers, nor readers, nor the *columns* of the critical journals would tolerate, and should fill my pages with names, which, however interesting they may still be for me, would hardly have any interest for the public, however gentle or pensive.

One specialty, and that not a pleasant one, of a life so protracted as mine has been in the midst of such a society as that of Florence in those days, is the enormous quantity of the names which turn the tablets of memory into palimpsests, not twice, but fifty times written over!—unpleasant, not from the thronging *in* of the motley company, but from the inevitable passing *out* of them from the field of vision. One's recollections come to resemble those

of the spectator of a phantasmagoric show. Processions of heterogeneous figures, almost all of them connected in some way or other with more or less pleasant memories, troop across the magic circle of light, only, alack! to vanish into uttermost night when they pass beyond its limit. Of course all this is inevitable from the migratory nature of such a society as that which was gathered together on the banks of the Arno.

Some fixtures—comparatively fixtures—of course there were, who gave to our moving quicksand-like society some degree of cohesion.

Chief among these was of course the British minister—at the time of our arrival in Florence, and many years afterwards—Lord Holland. A happier instance of the right man in the right place could hardly be met with. At his great *omnium-gatherum* dinners and receptions—his hospitality was of the most catholic and generous sort—both he and Lady Holland (how pretty she then was there is her very clever portrait by Watts to testify) never failed to win golden opinions from all sorts and conditions of men and women. And in the smaller circle, which assembled in their rooms yet more frequently, they showed to yet greater advantage, for Lord Holland was one of the most amusing talkers I ever knew.

Of course many of those who ought to have been grateful for their admission to the minister's large receptions were discontented at not being invited to the smaller ones. And it was by some of these malcontents with more wit than reason, that Lady

Holland was accused of receiving in two very distinct fashions—*en ménage* and *en ménagerie.* The *mot* was a successful one, and nobody was more amused by it than the *spirituelle* lady of whom it was said. It was too happy a *mot* not to have been stolen by divers pilferers of such articles, and adapted to other persons and other occasions. But it was originally spoken of the time, place, and person here stated to have been the object of it.

Generally, in such societies in foreign capitals, a fruitful source of jealousy and discord is found in the necessary selection of those to be presented at the court of the reigning sovereign. But this, as far as I remember, was avoided in those halcyon days by the simple expedient of presenting all who desired it. And that Lord Holland *was* the right man in the right place as regards this matter the following anecdote will show.

When Mr. Hamilton became British minister at Florence, it was announced that his intention was, for the avoiding of all trouble and jealousy on the subject, to adhere strictly to the proper and recognised rule. He would present everybody and anybody who had been presented at home, and nobody who had not been so presented. And he commenced his administration on these lines, and the Grand Duke's receptions at the Pitti became notably weeded. But this had not gone on for more than two or three weeks before it was whispered in the minister's ear that the Grand Duke would be pleased if he were less strict in the matter of his presentations. "Oh!" said

Hamilton, "that's what he wants! *A la bonne heure!* He shall have them all, rag, tag, and bobtail." And so we returned to the *Saturnia regna* of "the good old times," and the Duke was credibly reported to have said that he "kept the worst drawing-room in Europe." But, of course, His Highness was thinking of the pockets of his liege Florentine letters of apartments and tradesmen, and was anxious only to make his city a favourite place of resort for the gold-bringing foreigners from that distant and barbarous western isle. The Pope, you see, had the pull in the matter of gorgeous Church ceremonies, but he couldn't have the fertilising barbarians dancing in the Vatican once a week!

One more anecdote I must find room for, because it is curiously illustrative in several ways of those *tempi passati, che non tornano più.* Florence was full of refugees from the political rigours of the papal government, who had for some time past found there an unmolested refuge. But the aspect of the times was becoming more and more alarming to Austria, and the *Duchini*, as we called the Sovereigns of Modena and Parma; and pressure was put on the Duke by the pontifical government insisting on the demand that these refugees should be given up by Tuscany. Easy-going Tuscany, not yet in anywise alarmed for herself, fought off the demand for a while, but was at last driven to notify her intention of acceding to it. It was in these circumstances that Massino d'Azeglio came to me one morning, in the garden of our house in the Via del Giglio—the same in which

the poet Milton lodged when he was in Florence—to which we had by that time moved, and told me that he wanted me to do something for him. Of course I professed all readiness, and he went on to tell me of the critical and dangerous position in which the refugees of whom I have spoken were placed, and said that I must go to Lord Holland and ask him to give them British passports. He urged that nothing could be easier, that no objection could possibly be taken to it; that the Tuscan government was by no means desirous of giving up these men, and would only be too glad to get out of it; that England both at Malta and in the Ionian Islands had plenty of Italian subjects—and in short, I undertook the mission, I confess with very small hopes of success. Lord Holland laughed aloud when I told my tale, and said he thought it was about the most audacious request that had ever been made to a British minister. But he ended by granting it. Doubtless he knew very well the truth of what d'Azeglio had stated—that the Tuscan government would be much too well pleased to ask any questions; and the passports were given.

It was not long after our establishment in the Via dei Malcontenti that a great disaster came upon Florence and its inhabitants and guests. Arno was not in the habit of following the evil example of the Tiber by treating Florence as the latter so frequently did Rome. But in the winter of the year 1844 a terrible and unprecedented flood came. The rain fell in such torrents all one night that it was feared

that the Arno, already much swollen, would not be able to carry off the waters with sufficient rapidity. I went out early in the morning before breakfast, in company with a younger brother of the Dr. Nicholson of Penrith whom I have mentioned, who happened to be visiting us. We climbed to the top of Giotto's tower, and saw at once the terrible extent and very serious character of the misfortune. One-third, at least, of Florence, was under water, and the flood was rapidly rising. Coming down from our lofty observatory, we made our way to the "Lung' Arno," as the river quays are called. And there the sight was truly a terrible and a magnificent one. The river, extending in one turbid, yellow, swirling mass from the walls of the houses on the quay on one side, to those of the houses opposite, was bringing down with it fragments of timber, carcases of animals, large quantities of hay and straw;—and amid the wreck we saw a cradle with a child in it, safely navigating the tumbling waters! It was drawn to the window of a house by throwing a line over it, and the infant navigator was none the worse.

But very great fears were entertained for the very ancient Ponte Vecchio, with its load of silversmiths' and jewellers' shops, turning it from a bridge into a street — the only remaining example in Europe, I believe, of a fashion of construction once common. The water continued to rise as we stood watching it. Less than a foot of space yet remained between the surface of the flood and the keystone of the highest arch; and it was thought that if the water rose

sufficiently to beat against the solid superstructure of the bridge, it must have been swept away. But at last came the cry from those who were watching it close at hand, that for the last five minutes the surface had been stationary; and in another half hour it was followed by the announcement that the flood had begun to decrease. Then there was an immense sensation, of relief; for the Florentines love their old bridge; and the crowd began to disperse.

All this time I had had not a mouthful of breakfast, and we betook ourselves to Doney's *bottega* to get a cup of coffee before going home. But when we attempted this we found that it was more easily said than done. The Via dei Malcontenti as well as the whole of the Piazza di Santa Croce was some five feet under water! We succeeded, however, in getting aboard a large boat, which was already engaged in carrying bread to the people in the most deeply flooded parts of the town. But all difficulty was not over. Of course the street door of the Palazzo Berti was shut, and no earthly power could open it. Our apartment was on the second floor. Our landlord's family occupied the *primo*. Of course I could get in at their windows and then go up stairs. And we had a ladder in the boat; but the mounting to the first floor by this ladder, placed on the little deck of the boat, as she was rocked by the torrent, was no easy matter, especially for me, who went first. Eventually, however, Nicholson and I both entered the window, hospitably opened to receive us, in safety.

But it was one or two days before the flood subsided sufficiently for us to be provisioned in any other manner than by the boat; and for long years afterwards social events were dated in Florence as having happened "before or after the flood." In those days, and for many days subsequently to them, Florence did indeed—as I have observed when speaking of the motives which induced us to settle there—join to its other attractions that of being an economical place of residence. Our money consisted of piastres, pauls, and crazie. Eight of the latter were equal to a paul, ten of which were equivalent to a piastre. The value of the paul was, as nearly as possible, equal to fivepence-halfpenny English. The lira—the original representative of the leading denomination of our own *l. s. d.*—no longer existed in—the flesh I was going to say, but rather in—the metal. And it is rather curious, that just as the guinea remained, and indeed remains, a constantly-used term of speech after it has ceased to exist as current coin, so the scudo remained, in Tuscany, no longer visible or current, but retained as an integer in accounts of the larger sort. If you bought or sold house or land, for instance, you talked of scudi. In more every-day matters piastre or "francesconi" were the integers used, the latter being only a synonym for the former. And the proportion in value of the scudo and the piastre was exactly the same as that of the guinea and the sovereign, the former being worth ten and a half pauls, and the latter ten. The handsomest and

best preserved coin ordinarily current was the florin, worth two pauls and a half. Gold we rarely saw, but golden sequins (*zecchini*) were in existence, and were traditionally used, as it was said, for I have no experience in the matter, in the payment by the government of prizes won in the lottery.

Now, after this statement the reader will be in a position to appreciate the further information that a flask of excellent Chianti, of a quality rarely met with nowadays, was ordinarily sold for one paul. The flask contained (legal measure) seven troy pounds weight of liquid, or about three bottles. The same sum purchased a good fowl in the market. The subscription (*abbuonamento*) to the Pergola, the principal theatre, came to exactly two crazie and a half for each night of performance. This price admitted you only to the pit, but as you were perfectly free to enter any box in which there were persons of your acquaintance, the admission in the case of a bachelor, permanently or temporarily such, was all that was necessary to him. And the price of the boxes was small in proportion.

These boxes were indeed the drawing-rooms in which very much of the social intercourse of the *beau monde* was carried on. The performances were not very frequently changed (two operas frequently running through an entire season), and people went four or five times a week to hear, or rather to be present at, the same representation. And except on first nights or some other such occasion, or during the singing of the well-known tit-bits

of any opera, there was an amount of chattering in the house which would have made the hair of a *fanatico per la musica* stand on end. There was also an exceedingly comfortable but very parsimoniously-lighted large room, which was a grand flirting place, where people sat very patiently during the somewhat long operation of having their names called aloud, as their carriages arrived, by an official, who knew the names and addresses of us all. We also knew *his* mode of adapting the names of foreigners to his Italian organs. "Hasa" (Florentine for *casa*) "Trolo-pé," with a long-drawn-out accent on the last vowel, was the absolutely fatal signal for the sudden breaking up of many a pleasant chat.

Florence was also, in those days, an especially economical place for those to whom it was pleasant to enjoy during the whole of the gay season as many balls, concerts, and other entertainments as they could possibly desire, without the necessity, or indeed the possibility, of putting themselves to the expense of giving anything in return. There was a weekly ball at the Pitti Palace, and another at the Casino dei Nobili, which latter was supported entirely by the Florentine aristocracy. There were two or three balls at the houses of the foreign ministers, and generally one or two given by two or three wealthy Florentine nobles — there were a few, but very few such.

Perhaps the pleasantest of all these were the balls at the Pitti. They were so entirely *sans gêne*. No court dress was required save on the first day of the

year, when it was *de rigueur*. But absence on that occasion in no way excluded the absentee from the other balls. Indeed, save to a new comer, no invitations to foreigners were issued, it being understood that all who had been there once were welcome ever after. The Pitti balls were not by any means concluded by, but rather divided into two, by a very handsome and abundant supper, at which, to tell tales out of school (but then the offenders have no doubt mostly gone over to the majority), the guests used to behave abominably. The English would seize the plates of *bonbons* and empty the contents bodily into their coat pockets. The ladies would do the same with their pocket-handkerchiefs. But the Duke's liege subjects carried on their depredations on a far bolder scale. I have seen large portions of fish, sauce and all, packed up in a newspaper, and deposited in a pocket. I have seen fowls and ham share the same fate, without any newspaper at all. I have seen jelly carefully wrapped in an Italian countess's laced *mouchoir!* I think the servants must have had orders not to allow entire bottles of wine to be carried away, for I never saw that attempted, and can imagine no other reason why. I remember that those who affected to be knowing old hands used to recommend one to specially pay attention to the Grand Ducal Rhine wine, and remember, too, conceiving a suspicion that certain of these connoisseurs based their judgment in this matter wholly on their knowledge that the Duke possessed estates in Bohemia!

The English were exceedingly numerous in Flor-

ence at that time, and they were reinforced by a continually increasing American contingent, though our cousins had not yet begun to come in numbers rivalling our own, as has been the case recently. By the bye, it occurs to me, that I never saw an American pillaging the supper table; though, I may add, that American ladies would accept any amount of *bonbons* from English blockade runners.

And the mention of American ladies at the Pitti reminds me of a really very funny story, which may be told without offence to any one now living. I have a notion that I have seen this story of mine told somewhere, with a change of names and circumstances that spoil it, after the fashion of the people "who steal other folks' stories and disfigure them, as gipsies do stolen children to escape detection."

I had one evening at the Pitti, some years however after my first appearance there, a very pretty and naïvely charming American lady on my arm, whom I was endeavouring to amuse by pointing out to her all the personages whom I thought might interest her, as we walked through the rooms. Dear old Dymock, the champion, was in Florence that winter, and was at the Pitti that night. I dare say that there may be many now who do not know without being told, that Dymock, the last champion, as I am almost afraid I must call him—though doubtless Scrivelsby must still be held by the ancient tenure—was a very small old man, a clergyman, and not at all the sort of individual to answer to the popular idea of a champion. He was sitting in a nook all

by himself, and not looking very heroic or very happy as we passed, and nudging my companion's arm, I whispered, "That is the champion." The interest I excited was greater than I had calculated on, for the lady made a dead stop, and facing round to gaze at the old gentleman, said "Why, you don't tell me so! I should never have thought that that could be the fellow who licked Heenan! *But he looks a plucky little chap!*"

Perhaps the reader may have forgotten, or even never known, that the championship of the pugilistic world had then recently been won by Sayers—I think that was the name—in a fight with an antagonist of the name of Heenan. In fact it was I, and not my fair companion, who was a muff, for having imagined that a young American woman, nearly fresh from the other side of the Atlantic, was likely to know or ever have heard anything about the Champion of England.

There happened to be several Lincolnshire men that year in Florence, and there was a dinner at which I, as one of the "web-footed," by descent if not birth, was present, and I told them the story of my Pitti catastrophe. The lady's concluding words produced an effect which may be imagined more easily than described.

The Grand Duke at these Pitti balls used to show himself, and take part in them as little as might be. The Grand Duchess used to walk through the rooms sometimes. The Grand Duchess, a Neapolitan princess, was not beloved by the Tuscans; and I

am disposed to believe that she did not deserve their affection. But there was at that time another lady at the Pitti, the Dowager Grand Duchess, the widow of the late Grand Duke. She had been a Saxon princess, and was very favourably contrasted with the reigning Duchess in graciousness of manner, in appearance—for though a considerably older, she was still an elegant-looking woman—and, according to the popular estimate, in character. She also would occasionally walk through the rooms; but her object, and indeed that of the Duke, seemed to be to attract as little attention as possible.

Only on the first night of the year, when we were all in *gran gala*, *i.e.* in court suits or uniform, did any personal communication with the Grand Duke take place. His manner, when anybody was presented to him on these or other occasions, was about as bad and unprincely as can well be conceived. His clothes never fitted him. He used to support himself on one foot, hanging his head towards that side, and occasionally changing the posture of both foot and head, always simultaneously. And he always appeared to be struggling painfully with the consciousness that he had nothing to say. It was on one of these occasions that an American new arrival was presented to him by Mr. Maquay, the banker, who always did that office for Americans, the United States having then no representative at the Grand Ducal court. Maquay, thinking to help the Duke, whispered in his ear that the gentleman was connected by descent

with the great Washington, upon which the Duke, changing his foot, said, "*Ah! le grand Vash!*" His manner was that of a lethargic and not wide-awake man. When strangers would sometimes venture some word of compliment on the prosperity and contentment of the Tuscans, his reply invariably was, "*Sono tranquilli*"—they are quiet. But in truth much more might have been said; for assuredly Tuscany was a Land of Goshen in the midst of the peninsula. There was neither want nor discontent (save among a very small knot of politicians, who might almost have been counted on the hand), nor crime. There was at Florence next to no police of any kind, but the streets were perfectly safe by night or by day.

There was a story, much about that time, which made some noise in Europe, and was very disingenuously made use of, as such stories are, of a certain Florentine and his wife, named Madiai, who had been, it was asserted, persecuted for reading the Bible. It was not so. They were "persecuted" for, *i.e.* restrained from, preaching to others that they ought to read it, which is, though doubtless a bad, yet a very different thing.

I believe the Grand Duke (*gran ciuco*—great ass —as his irreverent Tuscans nicknamed him) was a good and kindly man, and under the circumstances, and to the extent of his abilities, not a bad ruler. The phrase, which Giusti applied to him, and which the inimitable talent of the satirist has made more durable than any other memorial of the poor *gran*

ciuco is likely to be, "*asciuga tasche e maremme*"—he dries up pockets and marshes—is as unjust as such *mots* of satirists are wont to be. The draining of the great marshes of the Chiana, between Arezzo and Chiusi, was a well-considered and most beneficent work on a magnificent scale, which, so far from "drying pockets," added enormously to the wealth of the country, and is now adding very appreciably to the prosperity of Italy. Nor was Giusti's reproach in any way merited by the Grand Ducal government. The Grand Duke personally was a very wealthy man, as well as, in respect to his own habits, a most simple liver. The necessary expenses of the little state were small; and taxation was so light that a comparison between that of the Saturnian days in question and that under which the Tuscans of the present day not unreasonably groan, might afford a text for some very far-reaching speculations. The Tuscans of the present day may preach any theological doctrines they please to any who will listen to them, or indeed to those who won't, but it would be curious to know how many individuals among them consider that, or any other recently-acquired liberty, well bought at the price they pay for it.

The Grand Duke was certainly not a great or a wise man. He was one of those men of whom their friends habitually say that they are "no fools," or "not such fools as they look," which generally may be understood to mean that the individual spoken of cannot with physiological accuracy be considered a

crétin. Nevertheless, in his case the expression was doubtless accurately true. He was not such a fool as he looked, for his appearance was certainly not that of a wise, or even an intelligent man.

One story is told of him, which I have reason to believe perfectly true, and which is so characteristic of the man, and of the time, that I must not deprive the reader of it.

It was the custom that on St. John's Day the Duke should visit and inspect the small body of troops who were lodged in the Fortezza di San Giovanni, or Fortezza da Basso, as it was popularly called, in contradistinction from another fort on the high ground above the Boboli Gardens. And it was expected that on these occasions the sovereign should address a few words to his soldiers. So the Duke, resting his person first on one leg and then on the other, after his fashion, stood in front of the two or three score of men drawn up in line before him, and after telling them that obedience to their officers and attachment to duty were the especial virtues of a soldier, he continued, "Above all, my men, I desire that you should remember the duties and observances of our holy religion, and—and—" (here, having said all he had to say, His Highness was at a loss for a conclusion to his harangue. But looking down on the ground as he strove to find a fitting peroration, he observed that the army's shoes were sadly in want of the blacking brush, so he concluded with more of animation and significance than he had before evinced) "and keep your shoes clean!"

I may find room further on to say a few words of what I remember of the revolution which dethroned poor *gran ciuco.* But I may as well conclude here what I have to say of him by relating the manner of his final exit from the soil of Tuscany, of which the malicious among the few who knew the circumstances were wont to say—very unjustly—that nothing in his reign became him like the leaving of it. I saw him pass out from the Porta San Gallo on his way to Bologna among a crowd of his late subjects, who all lifted their hats, though not without some satirical cries of "*Addio, sai!*" "*Buon viaggio!*" But a few, a very few, friends accompanied his carriage to the papal frontier, an invisible line on the bleak Apennines, unmarked by any habitation. There he descended from his carriage to receive their last adieus, and there was much lowly bowing as they stood on the highway. The Duke, not unmoved, bowed lowly in return, but unfortunately backing as he did so, tripped himself up with characteristic awkwardness, and tumbled backwards on a heap of broken stones prepared for the road, with his heels in the air, and exhibiting to his unfaithful Tuscans and ungrateful Duchy, as a last remembrance of him, a full view of a part of his person rarely put forward on such occasions.

And so *exeunt* from the sight of men and from history a Grand Duke and a Grand Duchy.

CHAPTER VII.

It was not long after the flood in Florence—it seems to me, as I write, that I might almost leave out the two last words!—that I saw Dickens for the first time. One morning in Casa Berti my mother was most agreeably surprised by a card brought in to her with "Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dickens" on it. We had been among his heartiest admirers from the early days of *Pickwick*. I don't think we had happened to see the *Sketches by Boz*. But my uncle Milton used to come to Hadley full of "the last *Pickwick*," and swearing that each number out-Pickwicked Pickwick. And it was with the greatest curiosity and interest that we saw the creator of all this enjoyment enter in the flesh.

We were at first disappointed, and disposed to imagine there must be some mistake! No! *that* is not the man who wrote *Pickwick!* What we saw was a dandified, pretty-boy-looking sort of figure, singularly young looking, I thought, with a slight flavour of the whipper-snapper genus of humanity.

Here is Carlyle's description of his appearance

at about that period of his life, quoted from Froude's *History of Carlyle's Life in London:*

"He is a fine little fellow—Boz—I think. Clear blue, intelligent eyes, eyebrows that he arches amazingly, large, protrusive, rather loose mouth, a face of most extreme mobility, which he shuttles about—eyebrows, eyes, mouth and all—in a very singular manner when speaking. Surmount this with a loose coil of common-coloured hair, and set it on a small compact figure, very small, and dressed *à la* D'Orsay rather than well—this is Pickwick. For the rest, a quiet, shrewd-looking little fellow, who seems to guess pretty well what he is and what others are."

One may perhaps venture to suppose that had the second of these guesses been less accurate, the description might have been a less kindly one.

But there are two errors to be noted in this sketch, graphic as it is. Firstly, Dickens's eyes were not blue, but of a very distinct and brilliant hazel—the colour traditionally assigned to Shakspeare's eyes. Secondly, Dickens, although truly of a slight, compact figure, was *not a very* small man. I do not think he was below the average middle height. I speak from my remembrance of him at a later day, when I had become intimate with him; but curiously enough, I find on looking back into my memory, that if I had been asked to describe him, as I first saw him, I too should have said that he was very small. Carlyle's words refer to Dickens's youth soon after he had published *Pickwick;* and

no doubt at this period he had a look of delicacy, almost of effeminacy, if one may accept Maclise's well-known portrait as a truthful record, which might give those who saw him the impression of his being smaller and more fragile in build than was the fact. In later life he lost this D'Orsay look completely, and was bronzed and reddened by wind and weather like a seaman.

In fact, when I saw him subsequently in London, I think I should have passed him in the street without recognising him. I never saw a man so changed.

Any attempt to draw a complete pen-and-ink portrait of Dickens has been rendered for evermore superfluous, if it were not presumptuous, by the masterly and exhaustive life of him by John Forster. But one may be allowed to record one's own impressions, and any small incident or anecdote which memory holds, on the grounds set forth by the great writer himself, who says in the introduction to the *American Notes* (first printed in the biography)—"Very many works having just the same scope and range have been already published. But I think that these two volumes stand in need of no apology on that account. The interest of such productions, if they have any, lies in the varying impressions made by the same novel things on different minds, and not in new discoveries or extraordinary adventures."

At Florence Dickens made a pilgrimage to Landor's villa, the owner being then absent in

England, and gathered a leaf of ivy from Fiesole to carry back to the veteran poet, as narrated by Mr. Forster. Dickens is as accurate as a topographer in his description of the villa, as looked down on from Fiesole. How often—ah, *how* often! —have I looked down from that same dwarf wall over the matchless view where Florence shows the wealth of villas that Ariosto declares made it equivalent to two Romes!

Dickens was only thirty-three when I first saw him, being just two years my junior. I have said what he appeared to me then. As I knew him afterwards, and to the end of his days, he was a strikingly manly man, not only in appearance but in bearing. The lustrous brilliancy of his eyes was very striking. And I do not think that I have ever seen it noticed, that those wonderful eyes which saw so much and so keenly, were appreciably, though to a very slight degree, near-sighted eyes. Very few persons, even among those who knew him well, were aware of this, for Dickens never used a glass. But he continually exercised his vision by looking at distant objects, and making them out as well as he could without any artificial assistance. It was an instance of that force of will in him, which compelled a naturally somewhat delicate frame to comport itself like that of an athlete. Mr. Forster somewhere says of him, "Dickens's habits were robust, but his health was not." This is entirely true as far as my observation extends.

Of the general charm of his manner I despair of

giving any idea to those who have not seen or known him. This was a charm by no means dependent on his genius. He might have been the great writer he was and yet not have warmed the social atmosphere wherever he appeared with that summer glow which seemed to attend him. His laugh was brimful of enjoyment. There was a peculiar humorous protest in it when recounting or hearing anything specially absurd, as who should say "'Pon my soul this is *too* ridiculous! This passes all bounds!" and bursting out afresh as though the sense of the ridiculous overwhelmed him like a tide, which carried all hearers away with it, and which I well remember. His enthusiasm was boundless. It entered into everything he said or did. It belonged doubtless to that amazing fertility and wealth of ideas and feeling that distinguished his genius.

No one having any knowledge of the profession of literature can read Dickens's private letters and not stand amazed at the unbounded affluence of imagery, sentiment, humour, and keen observation which he poured out in them. There was no stint, no reservation for trade purposes. So with his conversation—every thought, every fancy, every feeling was expressed with the utmost vivacity and intensity, but a vivacity and intensity compatible with the most singular delicacy and nicety of touch when delicacy and nicety of touch were needed.

What were called the exaggerations of his writing

were due, I have no doubt, to the extraordinary luminosity of his imagination. He saw and rendered such an individuality as Mr. Pecksniff's or Mrs. Nickleby's for instance, something after the same fashion as a solar microscope renders any object observed through it. The world in general beholds its Pecksniffs and its Mrs. Nicklebys through a different medium. And at any rate Dickens got at the quintessence of his creatures, and enables us all, in our various measures, to perceive it too. The proof of this is that we are constantly not only quoting the sayings and doings of his immortal characters, but are recognising other sayings and doings as what *they* would have said or done.

But it is impossible for one who knew him as I did to confine what he remembers of him either to traits of outward appearance or to appreciations of his genius. I must say a few, a very few words of what Dickens appeared to me as a man. I think that an epithet, which, much and senselessly as it has been misapplied and degraded, is yet, when rightly used, perhaps the grandest that can be applied to a human being, was especially applicable to him. He was a *hearty* man, a large-hearted man that is to say. He was perhaps the largest-hearted man I ever knew. I think he made a nearer approach to obeying the divine precept, "Love thy neighbour as thyself," than one man in a hundred thousand. His benevolence, his active, energising desire for good to all God's creatures,

and restless anxiety to be in some way active for the achieving of it, were unceasing and busy in his heart ever and always.

But he had a sufficient capacity for a virtue, which, I think, seems to be moribund among us—the virtue of moral indignation. Men and their actions were not all much of a muchness to him. There was none of the indifferentism of that pseudo-philosophic moderation, which, when a scoundrel or a scoundrelly action is on the *tapis*, hints that there is much to be said on both sides. Dickens hated a mean action or a mean sentiment as one hates something that is physically loathsome to the sight and touch. And he could be angry, as those with whom he had been angry did not very readily forget.

And there was one other aspect of his moral nature, of which I am reminded by an observation which Mr. Forster records as having been made by Mrs. Carlyle. "Light and motion flashed from every part of it [his face]. It was as if made of steel." The first part of the phrase is true and graphic enough, but the image offered by the last words appears to me a singularly infelicitous one. There was nothing of the hardness or of the (moral) sharpness of steel about the expression of Dickens's face and features. Kindling mirth and genial fun were the expressions which those who casually met him in society were habituated to find there, but those who knew him well knew also well that a tenderness, gentle and sympathetic as that of a woman, was a

mood that his surely never "steely" face could express exquisitely, and did express frequently.

I used to see him very frequently in his latter years. I generally came to London in the summer, and one of the first things on my list was a visit to 20, Wellington Street. Then would follow sundry other visits and meetings—to Tavistock House, to Gadshill, at Verey's in Regent Street, a place he much patronised, &c., &c. I remember one day meeting Chauncy Hare Townsend at Tavistock House and thinking him a very singular and not particularly agreeable man. Edwin Landseer I remember dined there the same day. But he had been a friend of my mother's, and was my acquaintance of long long years before.

Of course we had much and frequent talk about Italy, and I may say that our ideas and opinions, and especially feelings on that subject, were always, I think, in unison. Our agreement respecting English social and political matters was less perfect. But I think that it would have become more nearly so had his life been prolonged as mine has been. And the approximation would, if I am not much mistaken, have been brought about by a movement of mind on his part, which already I think those who knew him best will agree with me in thinking had commenced. We differed on many points of politics. But there is one department of English social life—one with which I am probably more intimately acquainted than with any other, and which has always been to me one of much interest—

our public school system, respecting which our agreement was complete. And I cannot refrain from quoting. The opinion which he expresses is as true as if he had, like me, an eight years' experience of the system he is speaking of. And the passage, which I am about to give, is very remarkable as an instance of the singular acumen, insight, and power of sympathy which enabled him to form so accurately correct an opinion on a matter of which he might be supposed to know nothing.

"In July," says Mr. Forster, writing of the year 1858-9, "he took earnest part in the opening efforts on behalf of the Royal Dramatic College, which he supplemented later by a speech for the establishment of schools for actors' children, in which he took occasion to declare his belief that there were no institutions in England so socially liberal as its public schools, and that there was nowhere in the country so complete an absence of servility to mere rank, position, and riches. 'A boy there'" (Mr. Forster here quotes Dickens's own words) "'is always what his abilities and personal qualities make him. We may differ about the curriculum and other matters, but of the frank, free, manly, independent spirit preserved in our public schools I apprehend there can be no kind of question.'"

I have in my possession a great number of letters from Dickens, some of which might probably have been published in the valuable collection of his letters published by his sister-in-law and eldest daughter had they been get-at-able at the time

when they might have been available for that publication.[1] But I was at Rome, and the letters were safely stowed away in England in such sort that it would have needed a journey to London to get at them.

I was for several years a frequent contributor to *Household Words*, my contributions for the most part consisting of what I considered tit-bits from the byways of Italian history, which the persevering plough of my reading turned up from time to time.

In one case I remember the article was sent "to order." I was dining with him after I had just had all the remaining hairs on my head made to stand on end by the perusal of the officially published *Manual for Confessors*, as approved by superior authority for the dioceses of Tuscany. I was full of the subject, and made, I fancy, the hairs of some who sat at table with me stand on end also. Dickens said, with nailing forefinger levelled at me, "Give us that for *Household Words*. Give it us just as you have now been telling it to us"—which I accordingly did. Whether the publication of that article was in anywise connected with the fact that when I wished to purchase a second copy of that most extraordinary work I was told that it was out

[1] Some of the letters in question—such as I had with me—were sent to London for that purpose. I do not remember now which were and which were not. But if it should be the case that any of those printed here have been printed before, I do not think any reader will object to having them again brought under his eye.

of print, and not to be had, I do not know. Of course it was kept as continually in print as the *Latin Grammar*, for the constant use of the class for whom it was provided, and who most assuredly could not have found their way safely through the wonderful intricacies of the Confessional without it. And equally, of course, the publishers of so largely-circulated a work did not succeed in preventing me from obtaining a second copy of it.

Many of the letters addressed to me by Dickens concerned more or less my contributions to his periodical, and many more are not of a nature to interest the public even though they came from him. But I may give a few extracts from three or four of them.[1]

Here is a passage from a letter dated 3rd December, 1861, which my vanity will not let me suppress.

"Yes; the Christmas number *was* intended as a conveyance of all friendly greetings in season and out of season. As to its lesson, you need it almost as little as any man I know; for all your study and seclusion conduce to the general good, and disseminate truths that men cannot too earnestly take to heart. Yes, a capital story that of 'The Two Sea-born Babbies,' and wonderfully droll, I think. I may say so without blushing, for it is not by me. It was done by Wilkie Collins."

[1] I wish it to be observed that any letters, or parts of letters, from Dickens here printed are published with the permission and authorisation of his sister-in-law, Miss Georgina Hogarth.

Here is another short note, not a little gratifying to me personally, but not without interest of a larger kind to the reader :—

"*Tuesday, 15th November*, 1859.

"My dear Trollope,—I write this hasty word, just as the post leaves, to ask you this question, which this moment occurs to me.

"Montalembert, in his suppressed treatise, asks, 'What wrong has Pope Pius the Ninth done?' Don't you think you can very pointedly answer that question in these pages? If you cannot, nobody in Europe can. Very faithfully yours always,

"Charles Dickens."

Some, some few, may remember the interest excited by the treatise to which the above letter refers. No doubt I could, and doubtless did, though I forget all about it, answer the question propounded by the celebrated French writer. But there was little hope of my doing it as "pointedly" as my correspondent would have done it himself. The answer, which might well have consisted of a succinct statement of all the difficulties of the position with which Italy was then struggling, had to confine itself to the limits of an article in *All The Year Round*, and needed in truth to be pointed. I have observed that, in all our many conversations on Italian matters, Dickens's views and opinions coincided with my own, without, I think, any point of divergence. Very specially was this the case as regards all that concerned the Vatican and the doings of the Curia.

How well I remember his arched eyebrows and laughing eyes when I told him of Garibaldi's proposal that all priests should be summarily executed! I think it modified his ideas of the possible utility of Garibaldi as a politician.

Then comes an invitation to "my Falstaff house at Gadshill."

Here is a letter of the 17th February, 1866, which I will give *in extenso*, bribed again by the very flattering words in which the writer speaks of our friendship :—

"My dear Trollope,—I am heartily glad to hear from you. It was such a disagreeable surprise to find that you had left London" [I had been called away at an hour's notice] "on the occasion of your last visit without my having seen you, that I have never since got it out of my mind. I felt as if it were my fault (though I don't know how that can have been), and as if I had somehow been traitorous to the earnest and affectionate regard with which you have inspired me.

"The lady's verses are accepted by the editorial potentate, and shall presently appear." [I am ashamed to say that I totally forget who the lady was.]

"I am not quite well, and am being touched up (or down) by the doctors. Whether the irritation of mind I had to endure pending the discussions of a preposterous clerical body called a Convocation, and whether the weakened hopefulness of mankind

which such a dash of the middle ages in the colour and pattern of 1866 engenders, may have anything to do with it, I don't know.

"What a happy man you must be in having a new house to work at. When it is quite complete, and the roc's egg hung up, I suppose you will get rid of it bodily and turn to at another." [*Absit omen!* At this very moment, while I transcribe this letter, I *am* turning to at another.]

"*Daily News* correspondent" [as I then for a short time was], "Novel, and Hospitality! Enough to do indeed! Perhaps the day *might* be advantageously made longer for such work—or say life." [Ah! if the small matters rehearsed had been all, I could more contentedly have put up with the allowance of four-and-twenty hours.] "And yet I don't know. Like enough we should all do less if we had time to do more in.

"Layard was with us for a couple of days a little while ago, and brought the last report of you, and of your daughter, who seems to have made a great impression on him. I wish he had had the keepership of the National Gallery, for I don't think his Government will hold together through many weeks.

"I wonder whether you thought as highly of Gibson's art as the lady did who wrote the verses. I must say that I did *not*, and that I thought it of a mechanical sort, with no great amount of imagination in it. It seemed to me as if he 'didn't find me' in that, as the servants say, but only provided

me with carved marble, and expected me to furnish myself with as much idea as I could afford.

"Very faithfully yours,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

I do not remember the verses, though I feel confident that the lady who sent them through me must have been a very charming person. As to Gibson, no criticism could be sounder. I had a considerable liking for Gibson as a man, and admiration for his character, but as regards his ideal productions I think Dickens hits the right nail on the head.

In another letter of the same year, 25th July, after a page of remarks on editorial matters, he writes :—

"If Italy could but achieve some brilliant success in arms! That she does not, causes, I think, some disappointment here, and makes her sluggish friends more sluggish, and her open enemies more powerful. I fear too that the Italian ministry have lost an excellent opportunity of repairing the national credit in London city, and have borrowed money in France for the poor consideration of lower interest, which" [*sic*, but I suspect *which* must be a slip of the pen for *than*] "they could have got in England, greatly to the re-establishment of a reputation for public good faith. As to Louis Napoleon, his position in the whole matter is to me like his position in Europe at all times, simply disheartening and astounding. Between Prussia and Austria there is, in my mind (but for Italy), not a pin to choose. If each could

smash the other I should be, as to those two Powers, perfectly satisfied. But I feel for Italy almost as if I were an Italian born. So here you have in brief my confession of faith.

"Mr. Home" [as he by that time called himself, —when he was staying in my house his name was Hume], "after trying to come out as an actor, first at Fechter's (where I had the honour of stopping him short), and then at the St. James's Theatre under Miss Herbert (where he was twice announced, and each time very mysteriously disappeared from the bills), was announced at the little theatre in Dean Street, Soho, as a 'great attraction for one night only,' to play last Monday. An appropriately dirty little rag of a bill, fluttering in the window of an obscure dairy behind the Strand, gave me this intelligence last Saturday. It is like enough that even that striking business did not come off, for I believe the public to have found out the scoundrel; in which lively and sustaining hope this leaves me at present.

"Ever faithfully yours,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

Here is a letter which, as may be easily imagined, I value much. It was written on the 2nd of November, 1866, and reached me at Brest. It was written to congratulate me on my second marriage and among the great number which I received on that occasion is one of the most warm-hearted:—

"MY DEAR TROLLOPE,—I should have written immediately to congratulate you on your then

approaching marriage, and to assure you of my most cordial and affectionate interest in all that nearly concerns you, had I known how best to address you.

"No friend that you have can be more truly attached to you than I am. I congratulate you with all my heart, and believe that your marriage will stand high upon the list of happy ones. As to your wife's winning a high reputation out of your house—if you care for that; it is not much as an addition to the delights of love and peace and a suitable companion for life—I have not the least doubt of her power to make herself famous.

"I little thought what an important master of the ceremonies I was when I first gave your present wife an introduction to your mother. Bear me in your mind then as the unconscious instrument of your having given your best affection to a worthy object, and I shall be the best paid master of the ceremonies since Nash drove his coach and six through the streets of Bath.

"Faithfully yours,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

Among a heap of others I find a note of invitation written on the 9th of July, 1867, in which he says: "My 'readings' secretary, whom I am despatching to America at the end of this week, will dine with me at Verey's in Regent Street at six exact to be wished God-speed. There will only be besides, Wills, Wilkie Collins, and Mr. Arthur Chappell. Will you come? No dress. Evening left quite free."

I went, and the God-speed party was a very pleasant one. But I liked best to have him, as I frequently had, all to myself. I suppose I am not, as Johnson said, a "clubbable" man. At all events I highly appreciate what the Irishman called a tatur-tatur dinner, whether the gender in the case be masculine or feminine; and I incline to give my adherence to the philosophy of the axiom that declares "two to be company, and three none." But then I am very deaf, and that has doubtless much to do with it.

On the 10th of September, 1868, Dickens writes:—

"The madness and general political bestiality of the General Elections will come off in the appropriate Guy Fawkes days. It was proposed to me, under very flattering circumstances indeed, to come in as the third member for Birmingham; I replied in what is now my stereotyped phrase, 'that no consideration on earth would induce me to become a candidate for the representation of any place in the House of Commons.' Indeed it is a dismal sight, is that arena altogether. Its irrationality and dishonesty are quite shocking." [What would he have said now!] "How disheartening it is, that in affairs spiritual or temporal mankind will not begin at the beginning, but *will* begin with assumptions. Could one believe without actual experience of the fact, that it would be assumed by hundreds of thousands of pestilent boobies, pandered to by politicians, that

the Established Church in Ireland has stood between the kingdom and Popery, when as a crying grievance it has been Popery's trump-card!

"I have now growled out my growl, and feel better.

"With kind regards, my dear Trollope,

"Faithfully yours,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

In the December of that year came another growl, as follows:—

"KENNEDY'S HOTEL, EDINBURGH.

"MY DEAR TROLLOPE,—I am reading here, and had your letter forwarded to me this morning. The MS. accompanying it was stopped at *All The Year Round* office (in compliance with general instructions referring to any MS. from you) and was sent straight to the printer.

"Oh dear no! Nobody supposes for a moment that the English Church will follow the Irish Establishment. In the whole great universe of shammery and flummery there is no such idea floating. Everybody knows that the Church of England as an endowed establishment is doomed, and would be, even if its hand were not perpetually hacking at its own throat; but as was observed of an old lady in gloves in one of my Christmas books, 'Let us be polite or die!'

"Anthony's ambition" [in becoming a candidate for Beverley] "is inscrutable to me. Still, it is the ambition of many men; and the honester the man

who entertains it, the better for the rest of us, I suppose.

"Ever, my dear Trollope,

"Most cordially yours,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

Here is another "growl," provoked by a species of charlatan, which he, to whom all charlatans were odious, especially abominated—the pietistic charlatan :—

"Oh, we have such a specimen here! a man who discourses extemporaneously, positively without the power of constructing one grammatical sentence; but who is (ungrammatically) deep in Heaven's confidence on the abstrusest points, and discloses some of his private information with an idiotic complacency insupportable to behold.

"We are going to have a bad winter in England too probably. What with Ireland, and what with the last new Government device of getting in the taxes before they are due, and what with vagrants, and what with fever, the prospect is gloomy."

The last letter I ever received from him is dated the 10th of November, 1869. It is a long letter, but I will give only one passage from it, which has, alas! a peculiarly sad and touching significance when read with the remembrance of the catastrophe then hurrying on, which was to put an end to all projects and purposes. I had been suggesting a walking excursion across the Alps. He writes :—

"Walk across the Alps? Lord bless you, I am

'going' to take up my alpenstock and cross all the passes. And, I am 'going' to Italy. I am also 'going' up the Nile to the second cataract; and I am 'going' to Jerusalem, and to India, and likewise to Australia. My only dimness of perception in this wise is, that I don't know *when*. If I did but know when, I should be so wonderfully clear about it all! At present I can't see even so much as the Simplon in consequence of certain farewell readings and a certain new book (just begun) interposing their dwarfish shadow. But whenever (if ever) I change 'going' into 'coming,' I shall come to see you.

"With kind regards, ever, my dear Trollope,

"Your affectionate friend,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

And those were the last words I ever had from him!

CHAPTER VIII.

In those days—*temporibus illis*, as the historians of long-forgotten centuries say—there used to be a very general exodus of the English colony at Florence to the baths of Lucca during the summer months. Almost all Italians, who can in anywise afford to do so, leave the great cities nowadays for the seaside, even as those do who have preceded them in the path of modern luxurious living. But at the time of which I am writing the Florentines who did so were few, and almost confined to that inner circle of the fashionable world which partly lived with foreigners, and had adopted in many respects their modes and habits. Those Italians, however, who did leave their Florence homes in the summer, went almost all of them to Leghorn. The baths of Lucca were an especially and almost exclusively English resort.

It was possible to induce the *vetturini* who supplied carriages and horses for the purpose, to do the journey to the baths in one day, but it was a very long day, and it was necessary to get fresh horses at Lucca. There was no good sleeping-

place between Florence and Lucca—nor indeed is there such now—and the journey from the capital of Tuscany to that of the little Duchy of Lucca, now done by rail in less than two hours, was quite enough for a *vetturino's* pair of horses. And when Lucca was reached there were still fourteen miles, nearly all collar work, between that and the baths, so that the plan more generally preferred was to sleep at Lucca.

The baths (well known to the ancient Romans, of course, as what warm springs throughout Europe were not?) consisted of three settlements, or groups of houses—as they do still, for I revisited the well-remembered place two or three years ago. There was the "Ponte," a considerable village gathered round the lower bridge over the Lima, at which travellers from Florence first arrived. Here were the assembly rooms, the reading room, the principal baths, *and* the gaming-tables—for in those pleasant wicked days the remote little Lucca baths were little better than Baden subsequently and Monte Carlo now. Only we never, to the best of my memory, suicided ourselves, though it might happen occasionally, that some innkeeper lost the money which ought to have gone to him, because "the bank" had got hold of it first.

Then secondly there was the "Villa," about a mile higher up the lovely little valley of the Lima, so called because the Duke's villa was situated there. The Villa had more the pretension—a very little more—of looking something like a little bit of town.

At least it had its one street paved. The ducal villa was among the woods immediately above it.

The third little group of buildings and lodging-houses was called the "Bagni Caldi." The hotter, and, I fancy, the original springs were there, and it was altogether more retired and countrified, nestling closely among the chesnut woods. The whole surrounding country indeed is one great chesnut forest, and the various little villages, most of them picturesque in the highest degree, which crown the summits of the surrounding hills, are all of them closely hedged in by the chesnut woods, which clothe the slopes to the top. These villages burrow in what they live on like mice in a cheese, for many of the inhabitants never taste any other than chesnut flour bread from year's end to year's end.

The inhabitants of these hills, and indeed those of the duchy generally, have throughout Italy the reputation of being morally about the best population in the peninsula. Servants from the Lucchese, and especially from the district I am here speaking of, were, and are still, I believe, much prized. Lucca, as many readers will remember, enjoys among all the descriptive epithets popularly given to the different cities of Italy, that of *Lucca la industriosa.*

To us migratory English those singularly picturesque villages which capped all the hills, and were reached by curiously ancient paved mule paths zig-zagging up among the chesnut woods, seemed to have been created solely for artistic and picnic purposes. The Saturnian nature of the life lived in

them may be conceived from the information once given me by the inhabitants of one of these mountain settlements in reply to some inquiry about the time of day, that it was always noon there when the priest was ready for his dinner.

Such were the summer quarters of the English Florentine colony, *temporibus illis*. There used to be, I remember, a somewhat amusingly distinctive character attributed, of course in a general way subject to exceptions, to the different groups of the English rusticating world, according to the selection of their quarters in either of the above three little settlements. The "gay" world preferred the "Ponte," where the gaming-tables and ballrooms were. The more strictly "proper" people went to live at the "Villa," where the English Church service was performed. The invalid portion of the society, or those who wished quiet, and especially economy, sought the "Bagni Caldi."

In a general way we all desired economy, and found it. The price at the many hotels was nine pauls a day for board and lodging, including Tuscan wine, and was as much a fixed and invariable matter as a penny for a penny bun. Those who wanted other wine generally brought it with them, by virtue of a ducal ordinance which specially exempted from duty all wine brought by English visitors to the Baths.

I dare say, if I were to pass a summer there now, I should find the atmosphere damp, or the wine sour, or the bread heavy, or the society heavier, or

indulge in some such unreasonable and unseasonable grumbles as the near neighbourhood of four-score years is apt to inspire one with; but I used to find it amazingly pleasant once upon a time. It is a singular fact, which the remembrance of those days suggests to me, and which I recommend to the attention of Mr. Galton and his co-investigators, that the girls were prettier then than they are in these days, or that there were more of them! The stupid people, who are always discovering subjective reasons for objective observations, are as impertinent as stupid!

The Duke of Lucca used to do his utmost to make the baths attractive and agreeable. There is no Duke of Lucca now, as all the world knows. The Congress of Vienna put an end to him by ordaining that, when the ducal throne of Parma should become vacant, the reigning Duke of Lucca should succeed to it, while his duchy of Lucca should be united to Florence. This change took place while I was still a Florentine. The Duke of Lucca would none of the new dukedom proposed to him. He abdicated, and his son became Duke of Parma. This son was, in truth, a great ne'er-do-well, and very shortly got murdered in the streets of his new capital by an offended husband.

The change was most unwelcome to Lucca, and especially to the baths, which had thriven and prospered under the fostering care of the old Duke. He used to pass every summer there, and give constant very pleasant, but very little royal, balls

at his villa. The Tuscan satirist Giusti, in the celebrated little poem in which he characterises the different reigning sovereigns in the peninsula, calls him the Protestant Don Giovanni, and says that in the roll of tyrants he is neither fish nor flesh.

Of the first two epithets I take it he deserved the second more than the first. His Protestantising tendencies might, I think, have been more accurately described as non-Catholicising. But people are very apt to judge in this matter after the fashion of the would-be dramatist, who, on being assured that he had no genius for tragedy, concluded that he must therefore have one for comedy. The Duke's Protestantism, I suspect, limited itself to, and showed itself in, his dislike and resistance to being bothered by the rulers of neighbouring states into bothering anybody else about their religious opinions. As for his place in the "roll of tyrants," he was always accused of (or praised for) liberalising ideas and tendencies, which would in those days have very soon put an end to him and his tiny duchy, if he had attempted to govern it in accordance with them. As matters were, his "policy," I take it, was pretty well confined to the endeavour to make his sovereignty as little troublesome to himself or anybody else as possible. His subjects were *very* lightly taxed, for his private property rendered him perfectly independent of them as regarded his own personal expenditure.

The "gayer" part of our little world at the baths used, as I have said, more especially to congregate

at the "Ponte," and the more "proper" portion at the "Villa," for, as I have also said, the English Church service was performed there, in a hired room, as I remember, when I first went there. But a church was already in process of being built, mainly by the exertions of a lady, who assuredly cannot be forgotten by any one who ever knew the Baths in those days, or for many years afterwards—Mrs. Stisted. Unlike the rest of the world she lived neither at the "Ponte," nor at the "Villa," nor at the "Bagni Caldi," but at "The Cottage," a little habitation on the bank of the stream about half-way between the "Ponte" and the 'Villa." Also unlike all the rest of the world she lived there permanently, for the place was her own, or rather the property of her husband, Colonel Stisted. He was a long, lean, grey, faded, exceedingly mild, and perfectly gentlemanlike old man; but she was one of the queerest people my roving life has ever made me acquainted with.

She was the Queen of the Baths. On one occasion at the ducal villa, his Highness, who spoke English perfectly, said as she entered the room, "Here comes the Queen of the Baths!" "He calls me his Queen," said she, turning to the surrounding circle with a magnificent wave of the hand and delightedly complacent smile. It was not exactly *that* that the Duke had said, but he was immensely amused, as were we all, for some days afterwards.

She was a stout old lady, with large rubicund

face and big blue eyes, surrounded by very abundant grey curls. She used to play, or profess to play, the harp, and adopted, as she explained, a costume for the purpose. This consisted of a loose, flowing garment, much like a muslin surplice, which fell back and allowed the arm to be seen when raised for performance on her favourite instrument. The arm probably was, or had once been, a handsome one. The large grey head, and the large blue eyes, and the drooping curls, were also raised simultaneously, and the player looked singularly like the picture of King David similarly employed, which I have seen as a frontispiece in an old-fashioned prayer-book. But the specialty of the performance was that, as all present always said, no sound whatever was heard to issue from the instrument! "Attitude is everything," as we have heard in connection with other matters; but with dear old Mrs. Stisted at her harp it was absolutely and literally so to the exclusion of all else!

She and the good old colonel—he *was* a truly good and benevolent man, and, indeed, I believe she was a good and charitable woman, despite her manifold absurdities and eccentricities—used to drive out in the evening among her subjects—*her* subjects, for neither I nor anybody else ever heard him called King of the Baths!—in an old-fashioned, very shabby and very high-hung phaeton, sometimes with her niece Charlotte—an excellent creature and universal favourite—by her side, and the colonel on the seat behind, ready to offer the hospitality of the place

by his side to any mortal so favoured by the queen as to have received such an invitation.

The poor dear old colonel used to play the violoncello, and did at least draw some more or less exquisite sounds from it. But one winter they paid a visit to Rome, and the old man died there. She wished, in accordance doubtless with his desire, to bring back his body to be buried in the place they had inhabited for so many years, and with which their names were so indissolubly entwined in the memory of all who knew them—which means all the generations of nomad frequenters of the Baths for many, many years. The Protestant burial-ground also was recognised as *quasi* hers, for it is attached to the church which she was mainly instrumental in building. The colonel's body therefore was to be brought back from Rome to be buried at Lucca Baths.

But such an enterprise was not the simplest or easiest thing in the world. There were official difficulties in the way, ecclesiastical difficulties and custom-house difficulties of all sorts. Where there is a will, however, there is a way. But the way which the determined will of the Queen of the Baths discovered for itself upon this occasion was one which would probably have occurred to few people in the world save herself. She hired a *vetturino*, and told him that he was to convey a servant of hers to the baths of Lucca, who would be in charge of goods which would occupy the entire interior of the carriage. She then obtained, what

was often accorded without much difficulty in those days, from both the Pontifical and the Tuscan Governments, a *lascia passare* for the contents of the carriage as *bonâ fide roba usata*—"used up, or second-hand goods." And under this denomination the poor old colonel, packed in the carriage together with his beloved violoncello, passed the gates of Rome and the Tuscan frontier, and arrived safely at the place of his latest destination. The servant who was employed to conduct this singular operation did not above half like the job entrusted to him, and used to tell afterwards how he was frightened out of his wits, and the driver exceedingly astonished, by a sudden *pom-m-m* from the interior of the carriage, caused by the breaking, in consequence of some atmospheric change, of one of the strings of the violoncello.

Malicious people used to say that the Queen of the Baths was innocent of all deception as regarded the custom-house officials; for that if any article was ever honestly described as *roba usata*, the old colonel might be so designated.

The queen herself shortly followed (by another conveyance), and was present at the interment, on which occasion she much impressed the population by causing a superb crimson chair to be placed at the head of the grave, in order that she might be present without standing during the service. The chair was well known, because the queen, both at the Baths and at Florence, was in the habit of sending it about to the houses at which she visited,

since she preferred doing so to incurring the risk of the less satisfactory accommodation her friends might offer her!

If space and the reader's patience would allow of it, I might gossip on of many more reminiscences of the baths of Lucca, all pleasant or laughable. But I must conclude by the story of a tragedy, which I will tell, because it is, in many respects, curiously characteristic of the time and place.

The Duke, who, as I have said, spoke English perfectly well, was fond of surrounding himself with foreign, and specially English, dependents. He had at the time of which I am speaking, two English —or rather, one English and one Irish—chamberlains, and a third, who, though a German, was, from having married an Englishwoman, and habitually speaking English, and living with Englishmen, much the same, at least to the Duke, as an Englishman. The Englishman was a young man; the German an older man, and the father of a family. And both were good, upright, and honourable men; both long since gone over to the majority.

The Irishman, also a young man, was a bad fellow; but he was an especial favourite with the Duke, who was strongly attached to him. It is not necessary to print his name. He has gone to his account. But it might nevertheless happen that the printing of my story with his name in these pages might still give pain to somebody.

There was also that year an extremely handsome and attractive lady, a widow, at the Baths. I will

not give her name either. For though there was no sort of blame or discredit of any kind attached or attachable to her from any part of my story, as she is, I believe, still living, and as the memory of that time cannot but be a painful one to her, it is as well to suppress it. The lady, as I have said, was handsome and young, and of course all the young fellows who got a chance flirted with her —*en tout bien tout honneur*. But the Irish chamberlain attached himself to her, not with any but perfectly avowable intentions, but more seriously than the other youngsters, and with an altogether serious eye to her very comfortable dower.

Now during that same summer there was at the Baths Mr. Plowden, the banker from Rome. He was then a young man; he has recently died an old one in the Eternal City. His name I mention in telling my story because much blame was cast upon him at the time by people in Rome, in Florence, and at the Baths, who did not know the facts as entirely and accurately as I knew them; and I am able here to declare publicly what I have often declared privately, that he behaved well and blamelessly in the whole matter.

And probably, though I have no distinct recollection that it was so, Plowden may have also been smitten by the lady. Now, whether the Irishman imagined that the young banker was his most formidable rival, or whether there may have been some previous cause of ill-will between the two men, I cannot say, but so it was that the chamberlain

sent a challenge to the banker. The latter declined to accept it on the ground that he *was* a banker and not a fighting man, and that his business position would have been materially injured by his fighting a duel. The Irishman might have made the most of this triumph, such as it was. But he was not content with doing so, and lost none of the opportunities, which the social habits of such a place daily afforded him, for insulting and outraging his enemy. And he was continually boasting to his friends that before the end of the season he would compel him to come out and be shot at.

And before the end of the season came, his persistent efforts were crowned with success. Plowden finding his life altogether intolerable under the harrow of the bully's insolence, at length one day challenged *him*. Then arose the question of the locality where the duel was to take place. The laws of the duchy were very strict against duelling, and the Duke himself was personally strongly opposed to it. In the case of his own favourite chamberlain, too, his displeasure was likely to be extreme. But in the neighbourhood of the Baths the frontier line which divides the Duchy of Modena from that of Lucca is a very irregular and intricate one. A little below the "Ponte" at the Baths, the Lima falls into the Serchio, and the upper valley of the latter river is of a very romantic and beautiful character. Now we all knew that hereabouts there were portions of Modenese territory interpenetrating that of the Duchy of Lucca, but none of us knew the

exact line of the boundary. And the favourite chamberlain, with true Irish impudence, undertook to obtain exact information from the Duke himself.

There was a ball that night, at which the whole of the society were present, and, strange as it may seem, I do not think there was a man there who did not know that the duel was to be fought on the morrow, except the Duke himself. Many of the women even knew it perfectly well. The chamberlain getting the Duke into conversation on the subject of the frontier, learned from him that a certain highly romantic gorge, opening out from the valley of the Serchio, and called Turrite Cava, which he pretended to take an interest in as a place fitted for a picnic, was within the Modenese frontier.

All was arranged, therefore, for the meeting with pistols on the following morning; and the combatants proceeded to the spot fixed on, some five or six miles, I think, from the Baths. Plowden, who, as a sedate business man was less intimate with the generality of the young men at the Baths, was accompanied only by his second; his adversary was attended by a whole cohort of acquaintances—really far more after the fashion of a party going to a picnic, or some other party of pleasure, than in the usual guise of men bent on such an errand.

Plowden had never fired a pistol in his life, and knew about as much of the management of one as an archbishop. The other was an old duellist, and a practised performer with the weapon. All this

was perfectly well known, and the young men around the Irishman were earnest with him during their drive to the ground not to take his adversary's life, beseeching him to remember how heavy a load on his mind would such a deed be during the whole future of his own. Not a soul of the whole society of the Baths, who by this time knew what was going on to a man, and almost to a woman (my mother, it may be observed, had not been at the ball, and knew nothing about it), doubted that Plowden was going out to be shot as certainly as a bullock goes into the slaughter house to be killed.

The Irishman, in reply to all the exhortations of his companions, jauntily told them not to distress themselves; he had no intention of killing the fellow, but would content himself with "winging" him. He would have his right arm off as surely as he now had it on!

In the midst of all this the men were put up. At the first shot the Irishman's well-directed bullet whistled close to Plowden's head, but the random shot of the latter struck his adversary full in the groin!

He was hastily carried to a little *osteria*, which stood (and still stands) by the side of the road which runs up the valley of the Serchio, at no great distance from the mouth of the Turrite Cava gorge. There was a young medical man among those gathered there, who shook his head over the victim, but did not, I thought, seem very well up to dealing with the case.

One of my mother's earliest and most intimate friends at Florence was a Lady Sevestre, who was then at the Baths with her husband, Sir Thomas Sevestre, an old Indian army surgeon. He was a very old man, and was not much known to the younger society of the place. But it struck me that *he* was the man for the occasion. So I rushed off to the Baths in one of the *bagherini* (as the little light gigs of the country are called) which had conveyed the parties to the ground, and knocked up Sir Thomas. Of course all the story came new to him, and he was very much inclined to wash his hands of it. But on my representations that a life was at stake, his old professional habits prevailed, and he agreed to go back with me to Turrite Cava.

But no persuasions could induce him to trust himself to a *bagherino*. And truly it would have shaken the old man well-nigh to pieces. There was no other carriage to be had in a hurry. And at last he allowed me to get an arm-chair rigged with a couple of poles for bearers, and placed himself in it —not before he had taken the precaution of slinging a bottle of pale ale to either pole of his equipage. He wore a very wide-brimmed straw hat, a suit of professional black, and carried a large white sun-shade. And thus accoutred, and accompanied by four stalwart bearers, he started, while I ran by the side of the chair, as queer-looking a party as can well be imagined. I can see it all now ; and should have been highly amused at the time had I not

very strongly suspected that I was taking him to the bedside of a dying man.

And when he reached his patient, a very few minutes sufficed for the old surgeon to pronounce the case an absolutely hopeless one. After a few hours of agony, the bully, who had insisted on bringing this fate on himself, died that same afternoon.

Then came the question who was to tell the Duke. Who it was that undertook that disagreeable but necessary task, I forget. But the Duke came out to the little *osteria* immediately on hearing of the catastrophe; also the English clergyman officiating at the Baths came out. And the scene in that large, nearly bare, upper chamber of the little inn was a strange one. The clergyman began praying by the dying man's bedside, while the numerous assemblage in the room all kneeled, and the Duke kneeled with them, interrupting the prayers with his sobs after the uncontrolled fashion of the Italians.

He was very, very angry. But in unblushing defiance of all equity and reason, his anger turned wholly against Plowden, who, of course, had placed himself out of the small potentate's reach within a very few minutes after the catastrophe. But the Duke strove by personal application to induce the Grand Duke of Tuscany to banish Plowden from his dominions, which, to the young banker, one branch of whose business was at Florence and one at Rome, would have been a very serious matter. But this, poor old *ciuco*, more just and reasonable in

this case than his brother potentate, the Protestant Don Giovanni of Lucca, refused to do.

So our pleasant time at the Baths, for that season at least, ended tragically enough; and whenever I have since visited that singularly romantic glen of Turrite Cava, its deep rock-sheltered shadows have been peopled for me by the actors in that day's bloody work.

CHAPTER IX.

It was, to the best of my recollection, much about the same time as that visit of Charles Dickens which I have chronicled in the last chapter but one, which turned out to be eventually so fateful a one to me, as the correspondence there given shows, that my mother received another visit, which was destined to play an equally influential part in the directing and fashioning of my life. Equally influential perhaps I ought not to say, inasmuch as one-and-twenty years (with the prospect I hope of more) are more important than seventeen. But both the visits I am speaking of, as having occurred within a few days of each other, were big with fate, to me, in the same department of human affairs.

The visit of Dickens was destined eventually to bring me my second wife, as the reader has seen. The visit of Mr. and Mrs. Garrow to the Via dei Malcontenti, much about the same time, brought me my first.

The Arno and the Tiber both take their rise in the flanks of Falterona. It was on the banks of the first that my first married life was passed; on those

of the more southern river that the largest portion of my second wedded happiness was enjoyed.

Why Mr. and Mrs. Garrow called on my mother I do not remember. Somebody had given them letters of introduction to us, but I forget who it was. Mr. Garrow was the son of an Indian officer by a high caste Brahmin woman, to whom he was married. I believe that unions between Englishmen and native women are common enough. But a marriage, such as that of my wife's grandfather I am assured was, is rare, and rarer still a marriage with a woman of high caste. Her name was Sultana. I have never heard of any other name. Joseph Garrow, my father-in-law, was sent to England at an early age, and never again saw either of his parents, who both died young. His grandfather was an old Scotch schoolmaster at Hadley, near Barnet, and his great-uncle was the well known Judge Garrow. My father-in-law carried about with him very unmistakable evidence of his eastern origin in his yellow skin, and the tinge of the white of his eyes, which was almost that of an Indian. He had been educated for the bar, but had never practised, or attempted to do so, having while still a young man married a wife with considerable means. He was a decidedly clever man, especially in an artistic direction, having been a very good musician and performer on the violin, and a draughtsman and caricaturist of considerable talent.

The lady he married had been a Miss Abrams, but was at the time he married her the widow of (I

believe) a naval officer named Fisher. She had by her first husband one son and one daughter. There had been three Misses Abrams, Jewesses by race undoubtedly, but Christians by baptism, whose parent or parents had come to this country in the suite of some Hanoverian minister, in what capacity I never heard. They were all three exceptionally accomplished musicians, and seem to have been well known in the higher social circles of the musical world. One of the sisters was the authoress of many once well known songs, especially of one song called "Crazy Jane," which had a considerable vogue in its day. I remember hearing old John Cramer say that my mother-in-law could, while hearing a numerous orchestra, single out any instrument which had played a false note—and this he seemed to think a very remarkable and exceptional feat. She was past fifty when Mr. Garrow married her, but she bore him one daughter, and when they came to Florence both girls, Theodosia, Garrow's daughter, and Harriet Fisher, her elder half-sister, were with them, and at their second morning call both came with them.

The closest union and affection subsisted between the two girls, and ever continued till the untimely death of Harriet. But never were two sisters, or half-sisters, or indeed any two girls at all, more unlike each other.

Harriet was neither specially clever nor specially pretty, but she was, I think, perhaps the most absolutely unselfish human being I ever knew, and

one of the most loving hearts. And her position was one, that, except in a nature framed of the kindliest clay, and moulded by the rarest perfection of all the gentlest and self-denying virtues, must have soured, or at all events crushed and quenched, the individual placed in such circumstances. She was simply nobody in the family save the ministering angel in the house to all of them. I do not mean that any of the vulgar preferences existed which are sometimes supposed to turn some less favoured member of a household into a Cinderella. There was not the slightest shadow of anything of the sort. But no visitors came to the house or sought the acquaintance of the family for *her* sake. She had the dear, and, to her, priceless love of her sister. But no admiration, no pride of father or mother fell to *her* share. *Her* life was not made brilliant by the notice and friendship of distinguished men. Everything was for the younger sister. And through long years of this eclipse, and to the last, she fairly worshipped the sister who eclipsed her. Garrow, to do him justice, was equally affectionate in his manner to both girls, and entirely impartial in every respect that concerned the material well-being of them. But Theodosia was always placed on a pedestal on which there was no room at all for Harriet. Nor could the closest intimacy with the family discover any faintest desire on her part to share the pedestal. She was content and entirely happy in enjoying the reflected brightness of the more gifted sister.

Nor would perhaps a shrewd judge, whose estimate of men and women had been formed by observation of average humanity, have thought that the position which I have described as that of the younger of these two sisters, was altogether a morally wholesome one for her. But the shrewd judge would have been wrong. There never was a humbler, as there never was a more loving soul, than that of the Theodosia Garrow who became, for my perfect happiness, Theodosia Trollope. And it was these two qualities of humbleness and lovingness that, acting like invincible antiseptics on the moral nature, saved her from all "spoiling,"—from any tendency of any amount of flattery and admiration to engender selfishness or self-sufficiency. Nothing more beautiful in the way of family affection could be seen than the tie which united in the closest bonds of sisterly affection those two so differently constituted sisters. Very many saw and knew what Theodosia was as my wife. Very few indeed ever knew what she was in her own home as a sister.

When I married Theodosia Garrow she possessed just one thousand pounds in her own right, and little or no prospect of ever possessing any more; while I on my side possessed nothing at all, save the prospect of a strictly bread and cheese competency at the death of my mother, and "the farm which I carried under my hat," as somebody calls it. The marriage was not made with the full approbation of my father-in-law; but entirely in accordance with

the wishes of my mother, who simply, dear soul, saw in it, what she said, that "Theo" was of all the girls she knew, the one she should best like as a daughter-in-law. And here again the wise folks of the world (and I among them!) would hardly have said that the step I then took was calculated, according to all the recognised chances and probabilities of human affairs, to lead to a life of contentment and happiness. I suppose it ought not to have done so! But it did! It would be monstrously inadequate to say that I never repented it. What should I not have lost had I not done it!

As usual my cards turned up trumps! but they began to do so in a way that caused me much, and my wife more, grief at the time. Within two years after my marriage, poor, dear, good, loving Harriet caught small-pox and died! She was much more largely endowed than her half-sister, to whom she bequeathed all she had.

She had a brother, as I have said above. But he had altogether alienated himself from his family by becoming a Roman Catholic priest. There was no open quarrel. I met him frequently in after years at Garrow's table at Torquay, and remember his bitter complaints that he was tempted by the appearance of things at table which he ought not to eat. It would have been of no use to give or bequeath money to him, for it would have gone immediately to Romanist ecclesiastical purposes. He had nearly stripped himself of his own con-

siderable means, reserving to himself only the bare competence on which a Catholic priest might live. He was altogether a very queer fish! I remember his coming to me once in tearful but very angry mood, because, as he said, I had guilefully spread snares for his soul! I had not the smallest comprehension of his meaning till I discovered that his woe and wrath were occasioned by my having sent him as a present Berington's *Middle Ages*. I had fancied that his course of studies and line of thought would have made the book interesting to him, utterly ignorant or oblivious of the fact that it laboured under the disqualification of appearing in the *Index*.

I take it I knew little about the *Index* in those days. In after years, when three or four of my own books had been placed in its columns, I was better informed. I remember a very elegant lady who having overheard my present wife mention the fact that a recently published book of mine had been placed in the *Index*, asked her, with the intention of being extremely polite and complimentary, whether *her* (my wife's) books had been put in the *Index*. And when the latter modestly replied that she had not written anything that could merit such a distinction, her interlocutor, patting her on the shoulder with a kindly and patronising air, said "Oh! my dear, I am *sure* they will be placed there. They certainly ought to be!"

Mrs. Garrow, my wife's mother, was not, I think, an amiable woman. She must have been between

seventy and eighty when I first knew her; but she was still vigorous, and had still a pair of what must once have been magnificent, and were still brilliant and fierce black eyes. She was in no wise a clever woman, nor was our dear Harriet a clever girl. Garrow on the other hand and *his* daughter were both very markedly clever, and this produced a closeness of companionship and alliance between the father and daughter which painfully excited the jealousy of the wife and mother. But it was totally impossible for her to cabal with her daughter against the object of her jealousy. Harriet always seeking to be a peace-maker, was ever, if peace could not be made, stanchly on Theo's side. I am afraid that Mrs. Garrow did not love her second daughter at all; and I am inclined to suspect that my marriage was in some degree facilitated by her desire to get Theo out of the house. She was a very fierce old lady, and did not, I fear, contribute to the happiness of any member of her family.

How well I remember the appearance of Mr. and Mrs. Garrow, and those two girls in my mother's drawing-room in the Via dei Malcontenti. The two girls, I remember, were dressed exactly alike and very *dowdily*. They had just arrived in Florence from Tours, I think, where they had passed a year, or perhaps two, since quitting "The Braddons" at Torquay; and everything about them from top to toe was provincial, not to say shabby. It was a Friday, my mother's reception day, and the room

soon filled with gaily dressed and smart people, with more than one pretty girl among them. But I had already got into conversation with Theodosia Garrow, and, to the gross neglect of my duties as master of the house, and to the scandal of more than one fair lady, so I remained, till a summons more than twice repeated by her father took her away.

It was not that I had fallen in love at first sight, as the phrase is, by any means. But I at once felt that I had got hold of something of a quite other calibre of intelligence from anything I had been recently accustomed to meet with in those around me, and with a moral nature that was sympathetic to my own. And I found it very delightful. It is no doubt true that, had her personal appearance been other than it was, I should not probably have found her conversation equally delightful. But I am sure that it is equally true that had she been in face, figure, and person all she was, and at the same time stupid, or even not sympathetic, I should not have been equally attracted to her.

She was by no means what would have been recognised by most men as a beautiful girl. The specialties of her appearance, in the first place, were in a great measure due to the singular mixture of races from which she had sprung. One half of her blood was Jewish, one quarter Scotch, and one quarter pure Brahmin. Her face was a long oval, too long and too lanky towards the lower part of it for beauty. Her complexion was somewhat dark, and not good. The mouth was mobile, expressive,

perhaps more habitually framed for pathos and the gentler feelings, than for laughter. The jaw was narrow, the teeth good and white, but not very regular. She had a magnificent wealth of very dark brown hair, not without a gleam here and there of what descriptive writers, of course, would call gold, but which really was more accurately copper colour. And this grand and luxuriant wealth of hair grew from the roots on the head to the extremity of it, at her waist, when it was let down, in the most beautiful ripples. But the great feature and glory of the face were the eyes, among the largest I ever saw, of a deep clear grey, rather deeply set, and changing in expression with every impression that passed over her mind. The forehead was wide, and largely developed both in those parts of it which are deemed to indicate imaginative and idealistic power, and those that denote strongly marked perceptive and artistic faculties. The latter perhaps were the more prominently marked. The Indian strain showed itself in the perfect gracefulness of a very slender and elastic figure, and in the exquisite elegance and beauty of the modelling of the extremities.

That is not the description of a beautiful girl. But it is the fact that the face and figure very accurately so described were eminently attractive to me physically, as well as the mind and intelligence, which informed them, were spiritually. They were much more attractive to me than those of many a splendidly beautiful girl, the immense superiority of

whose beauty nobody knew better than I. Why should this have been so? That is one of the mysteries to the solution of which no moral or physical or psychical research has ever brought us an iota nearer.

I am giving here an account of the first impression my future wife made on me. I had no thought of wooing and winning her, for, as I have said, I was not in a position to marry. Meanwhile she was becoming acclimatised to Florentine society. She no longer looked *dowdy* when entering a room, but very much the reverse; and the little Florentine world began to recognise that they had got something very much like a new Corinne among them. But of course I rarely got a chance of monopolising her as I had done during that first afternoon. We were however constantly meeting, and were becoming ever more and more close friends. When the Garrows left Florence for the summer, I visited them at Lucerne, and subsequently met them at Venice. It was the year of the meeting of the Scientific Congress in that city.

That was a pleasant autumn in Venice! By that time I had become pretty well over head and ears in love with the girl by whose side I generally contrived to sit in the gondolas, in the Piazza in the evening, etcætera. It was lovely September weather —just the time for Venice. The summer days were drawing in, but there was the moon, quite light enough on the lagoons; and we were a great deal happier than the day was long.

Those Scientific Congresses, of which that at Venice was the seventh and the last, played a curious part, which has not been much observed or noted by historians, in the story of the winning of Italian independence. I believe that the first congress, at Pisa, I think, was really got up by men of science, with a view to furthering their own objects and pursuits. It was followed by others in successive autumns at Lucca, Milan, Genoa, Naples, Florence, and this seventh and last at Venice. But Italy was in those days thinking of other matters than science. The whole air was full of ideas, very discordant all of them, and vague most of them, of political change. The governments of the peninsula thought twice, and more than twice, before they would grant permission for the first of these meetings. Meetings of any kind were objects of fear and mistrust to the rulers. Those of Tuscany, who were by comparison liberal, and, as known to be such, were more or less objects of suspicion to the Austrian, Roman, and Neapolitan Governments, led the way in giving the permission asked for; and perhaps thought that an assembly of geologists, entomologists, astronomers, and mathematicians might act as a safety valve, and divert men's minds from more dangerous subjects. But the current of the times was running too strongly to be so diverted, and proved too much for the authorities and for the real men of science, who were, at least some of them, anxious to make the congresses really what they professed to be.

Gradually these meetings became more and more

mere social gatherings in outward appearance, and revolutionary propagandist assemblies in reality. As regards the former aspect of them, the different cities strove to outdo each other in the magnificence and generosity of their reception of their "scientific" guests. Masses of publications were prepared, especially topographical and historical accounts of the city which played Amphytrion for the occasion, and presented gratuitously to the members of the association. Merely little guide-books, of which a few hundred copies were needed in the case of the earlier meetings, they became in the case of the latter ones at Naples, Genoa, Milan, and Venice, large and magnificently printed tomes, prepared by the most competent authorities and produced at a very great expense.

Venice especially outdid all her rivals, and printed an account of the Queen of the Adriatic, embracing history, topography, science in all its branches, and artistic story, in four huge and magnificent volumes, which remains to the present day by far the best topographical monograph that any city of the peninsula possesses. This truly splendid work, which brought out in the ordinary way could not have been sold for less than six or eight guineas, was presented, together with much other printed matter—an enormous lithographed panorama of Venice and her lagoons some five feet long in a handsome roll cover, I remember among them—to every "member" on his enrolment as such.

Then there were concerts, and excursions, and

great daily dinners the gayest and most enjoyable imaginable, at which both sexes were considered to be equally scientific and equally welcome. The dinners were not absolutely gratuitous, but the tickets for them were issued at a price very much inferior to the real cost of the entertainment. And all this it must be understood was done not by any subscription of members scientific or otherwise, but by the city and its municipality; the motive for such expenditure being the highly characteristic Italian one, of rivalling and outdoing in magnificence other cities and municipalities, or in the historical language of Italy, "communes."

Old Rome, with her dependent cities, made no sign during all these autumns of ever increasing festivity. Pity that they should have come to an end before she did so; for at the rate at which things were going, we should all at least have been crowned on the Capitol, if not made Roman senators, *pour l'amour du Grec*, as the *savant* says in the *Précieuses Ridicules*, if we had gone to the Eternal City!

But the fact was, that the *soi-disant* 'ologists kicked up their heels a little too audaciously at Venice under Austria's nose; and the Government thought it high time to put an end to "science."

For instance, Prince Canino made his appearance in the uniform of the Roman National Guard! This was a little too much; and the Prince, all prince and Buonaparte as he was, was marched off to the frontier. Canino had every right to be there as a

man of science; for his acquirements in many branches of science were large and real; and specially as an entomologist he was known to be probably the first in Italy. But he was the man, who, when selling his principality of Canino, insisted on the insertion in the legal instrument of a claim to an additional five pauls (value about two shillings), for the title of prince which was attached to the possessor of the estates he was selling. He was an out-and-out avowed Republican, and was the blackest of black sheep to all the constituted governments of the peninsula. He looked as little as he felt and thought like a prince. He was a paunchy, oily-looking black haired man, whose somewhat heavy face was illumined by a brilliant black eye full of humour and a mouth expressive of good nature and *bonhomie*. His appearance in the proscribed uniform might have been considered by Austria, if her police authorities could have appreciated the fun of the thing, as wholesomely calculated to throw ridicule on the hated institution. He was utterly unassuming, and good-natured in his manner, and when seen in his ordinary black habiliments looked more like a well-to-do Jewish trader than anything else.

As for the social aspects of these Scientific Congresses, they were becoming every year more festive, and, at all events to the ignoramus outsiders who joined them, more pleasant. My good cousin and old friend, then Colonel, now General, Sir Charles Trollope, was at Venice that autumn. I

said on meeting him, "Now the first thing is to make you a member." "Me! a member of a Scientific Congress!" said he. "God bless you! I am as ignorant as a babe of all possible 'epteras and 'opteras, and 'statics and 'matics!" "Oh! nonsense! we are all men of science here! Come along!"—*i.e.*, to the ducal palace to be inscribed. "But what do you mean to tell them I am?" he asked. "Well! let's see! You must have superintended a course of instruction in the goose-step in your day?" "Rather so!" said he. "Very well, then. You are Instructor in Military Exercises in her B. M. Forces! You are all right! Come along!" And if I had said that he was Trumpeter Major of the 600th Regiment in the British Army, it would doubtless have been equally all right. So said, so done! And I see his bewildered look now, as the four huge volumes, about a load for a porter, to which he had become entitled, together with medals and documents of many kinds, were put into his arms.

Ah! those were pleasant days! And while Italy, under the wing of science, was plotting her independence, I was busy in forging the chains of that dependence which was to be a more unmixed source of happiness to me, than the independence which Italy was compassing has yet proved to her.

Those chains, however, as regarded at all events the outward and visible signs of them, had not got forged yet. I certainly had no "proposed" to

Theodosia. In fact, to the very best of my recollection I never did "propose" to her—or "pop," as the hideous phrase is—any decisive question at all. We seem, to my recollection, to have come gradually, insensibly, and mutually to consider it a matter of course that what we wanted was to be married, and that the only matter which needed any words or consideration was the question, how the difficulties in the way of our wishes were to be overcome.

In the autumn of 1847 my mother and I went to pass the winter in Rome. My sister Cecilia's health had been failing; and it began to be feared that there was reason to suspect the approach of the malady which had already destroyed my brother Henry and my younger sister Emily. It was decided therefore that she should pass the winter in Rome. Her husband's avocations made it impossible for him to accompany her thither, and my mother therefore took an apartment there to receive her. It was in a small *palazzo* in that part of the Via delle Quattro Fontane, which is now situated between the Via Nazionale and the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, to the left of one going towards the latter. There was no Via Nazionale then, and the buildings which now make the Via delle Quattro Fontane a continuous line of street existed only in the case of a few isolated houses and convents. It was a very comfortable apartment, roomy, sunny, and quiet. The house exists still, though somewhat modernised in outward

appearance, and is, I think, the second, after one going towards Santa Maria Maggiore has crossed the new Via Nazionale.

But the grand question was, whether it could be brought about that Theodosia Garrow should be permitted to be my mother's guest during that winter. A hint on the matter was quite sufficient for my dear mother, although I do not think that she had yet any idea that I was minded to give her a daughter-in-law. Theodosia's parents had certainly no faintest idea that anything more than ordinary friendship existed between me and their daughter, or, if they had had such, she would certainly have never been allowed to accept my mother's invitation. As for Theodosia herself and her willingness to come, it seems to me, as I look back, that nothing was said between us at all, any more than anything was said about making her my wife. I think it was all taken for granted, *sans mot dire*, by both of us. But there was one person who knew all about it; knew what was in both our hearts, and was eagerly anxious that the desire of them should be fulfilled. This was the good fairy Harriet Fisher. Without the strenuous exertion of her influence on her mother and Mr. Garrow, the object would hardly have been accomplished. Of course the plea put forward was the great desirability of taking advantage of such an opportunity of seeing Rome.

My sister, whose health, alas! profited nothing by that visit to Rome, and could have been profited

by no visit to any place on earth, became strongly attached to Theodosia; and the affection which grew up between them was the more to the honour of both of them, in that they were far as the poles asunder in opinions and habits of thought. My sister was what in those days was called a "Puseyite." Her opinions were formed on the highest High Church model, and her Church opinions made the greatest part, and indeed nearly the whole of her life. Theodosia had no Church opinions at all, High or Low! All her mind and interests were, at all events at that time, turned towards poetry and art. Subsequently she interested herself keenly in political and social questions, but had hardly at that time begun to do so. But she made a conquest of my sister.

Indeed it would have been very difficult for any one to live in the same house with her without loving her. She was so bright, her sympathies so ready, her intelligence so large and varied, that day after day her presence and her conversation were a continual delight; and she was withal diffident of herself, gentle and unassuming to a fault. My mother had already learned to love her truly as a daughter, before there was any apparent probability of her becoming one.

We did not succeed in bearing down all the opposition that in the name of ordinary prudence was made to our marriage, till the spring of forty-eight. We were finally married on the 3rd of April in that year, in the British Minister's chapel

in Florence, in the quiet, comfortable way in which we used to do such things in those days.

I told my good friend Mr. Plunkett (he had then become the English representative at the Court of Tuscany), that I wanted to be married the next day. "All right!" said he; "will ten o'clock do?" "Could not be better!" "Very good! Tell Robbins [the then English clergyman] I'll be sure to be there." So at ten the next morning we looked in at the Palazzo Ximenes, and in about ten minutes the business was done!

Of Mr. Robbins, who was as kind and good a little man as could be, I may note, since I have been led to speak of him, the following rather singular circumstance. He was, as I have been told, the son of a Devonshire farmer, and his two sisters were the wives of two of the principal Florentine nobles, one having married the Marchese Inghirami and the other the Marchese Bartolomei. What circumstances led to the accomplishment of a destiny apparently so strange for the family of a Devonshire farmer, I never heard. The clergyman and his sisters were all much my seniors.

After the expeditious ceremony we all—about half a score of us—went off to breakfast at the house of Mr. Garrow in the Piazza di Santa Maria Novella, and before noon my wife and I were off on a ramble among the Tuscan cities.

CHAPTER X.

My very old friend, Colonel Grant—General Grant many years before he died—used to say that if he wished without changing his place himself, to see the greatest possible number of his friends and acquaintances, he should stand perpetually at the foot of the column in the Place Vendôme. But it seems to me that at least as advantageous a post of observation for the purpose would be the foot of Giotto's tower in Florence! Who in these days lives and dies without going to Florence; and who goes to Florence without going to gaze on the most perfectly beautiful tower that human hands ever raised?

Let me tell (quite parenthetically) a really good story of that matchless building, which yet however will hardly be appreciated at its full value by those who have never yet seen it. When the Austrian troops were occupying Florence, one of the white-coated officers had planted himself in the Piazza in front of the tower, and was gazing at it earnestly, lost in admiration of its perfect beauty. "*Si svita, signore,*" said a little street urchin, coming up behind him—"It *unscrews*, sir!" As much as to say, "Wouldn't

you like just to take it off bodily and carry it away?" But, as I said, to apprehend the aptitude of the *gamin's* sneer, one must have oneself looked on the absolute perfection of proportion and harmony of its every part, which really does suggest the idea that the whole might be lifted bodily in one piece from its place on the soil. Whether the Austrian had the wit to answer "You are blundering, boy! you are taking me for a Frenchman," I don't know!

But I was saying, when the mention of the celebrated tower led me into telling, before I forgot it, the above story, that Florence was of all the cities of Europe, that in which one might be likely to see the greatest number of old, and make the greatest number of new acquaintances. I lived there for more than thirty years, and the number of persons, chiefly English, American, and Italian, whom I knew during that period is astonishing. The number of them was of course all the greater from the fact that the society, at least so far as English and Americans were concerned, was to a very great degree a floating one. They come back to my memory, when I think of those times, like a long procession of ghosts! Most of them, I suppose, *are* ghosts by this time. They pass away out of one's ken, and are lost!

Some, thank Heaven, are *not* lost; and some though lost, will never pass out of ken! If I were writing only for myself, I should like to send my memory roving among all that crowd of phantoms, catch them one after another as they dodge about

half eluding one when just on the point of recovering them, and, fixing them in memory's camera, photograph them one after another. But I cannot hope that such a gallery would be as interesting to the reader as it certainly would to me. And I must content myself with recording my recollections of those among them in whom the world may be supposed to take an interest.

Theodosia Garrow, when living with her parents at "The Braddons," at Torquay, had known Elizabeth Barrett. The latter was very much of an invalid at the time; so much so, as I think I have gathered from my wife's talk about those times, as to have prevented her from being a visitor to "The Braddons." But Theodosia was, I take it, to be very frequently found by the side of the sofa to which her friend was more or less confined. I fancy that Mr. Kenyon, who was an old friend and family connection of Elizabeth Barrett's family, and was also intimately acquainted with the Garrows and with Theodosia, must have been the first means of bringing the girls together. There were assuredly *very* few young women in England at that day to whom Theodosia Garrow in social intercourse would have had to look *up*, as to one on a higher intellectual level than her own. But Elizabeth Barrett was one of them. I am not talking of *acquirements*. Nor was my wife thinking of such when she used to speak of the poetess as she had known her at that time. I am talking, as my wife used to talk, of pure native intellectual power. And I consider it to have

been no small indication of the capacity of my wife's intelligence, that she so clearly and appreciatingly recognised and measured the distance between her friend's intellect and her own. But this appreciation on the one side was in nowise incompatible with a large and generous amount of admiration on the other. And many a talk in long subsequent years left with me the impression of the high estimation which the gifted poetess had formed of the value of her highly, but not so exceptionally, gifted admirer.

Of course this old friendship paved the way for a new one when the Brownings came to live in Florence. I flatter myself that that would in any case have found some *raison d'être*. But the pleasure of the two girls—girls no more in any sense—in meeting again quickened the growth of an intimacy which might otherwise have been slower in ripening.

To say that amid all that frivolous, gay, giddy, and, it must be owned, for the most part very unintellectual society (in the pleasures and pursuits of which, to speak honestly, I took, well pleased, my full share), my visits to Casa Guidi were valued by me as choice morsels of my existence, is to say not half enough. I was conscious even then of coming away from those visits a better man, with higher views and aims. And pray, reader, understand that any such effect was not produced by any talk or look or word of the nature of preaching, or anything approaching to it, but simply by the perception and appreciation of what Elizabeth Barrett Browning was; of the immaculate purity of every thought that

passed through her pellucid mind, and the indefeasible nobility of her every idea, sentiment, and opinion. I hope my reader is not so much the slave of conventional phraseology as to imagine that I use the word "purity" in the above sentence in its restricted and one may say technical, sense. I mean the purity of the upper spiritual atmosphere in which she habitually dwelt; the absolute disseverance of her moral as well as her intellectual nature from all those lower thoughts as well as lower passions which smirch the human soul. In mind and heart she was *white*—stainless. That is what I mean by purity.

Her most intimate friend at Florence was a Miss Isabella Blagden, who lived for many years at Bellosguardo, in a villa commanding a lovely view over Florence and the valley of the Arno from the southern side, looking across it therefore to Fiesole and its villa-and-cypress-covered slopes. Whether the close friendship between Mrs. Browning and Isa Blagden (we all called her Isa always) was first formed in Florence, or had its commencement at an earlier date, I do not know. But Isa was also the intimate and very specially highly-valued friend of my wife and myself. And this also contributed to our common friendship. Isa was (yes, as usual, "was," alas, though she was very much my junior) a very bright, very warm-hearted, very clever little woman, who knew everybody, and was, I think, more universally beloved than any other individual among us. A little volume of her poems was published after her untimely death. They are not such

as could take by storm the careless ears of the world, which knows nothing about her, and must, I suppose, be admitted to be marked by that mediocrity which neither gods nor men can tolerate. But it is impossible to read the little volume without perceiving how choice a spirit the authoress must have been, and understanding how it came to pass that she was especially honoured by the close and warm attachment of Mrs. Browning. I have scores of letters signed "Isa," or rather Sibylline leaves scrawled in the vilest handwriting on all sorts of abnormal fragments of paper, and despatched in headlong haste, generally concerning some little projected festivity at Bellosguardo, and advising me of the expected presence of some stranger whom she thought I should like to meet. Very many of such of these fragmentary scribblings, as were written before the Brownings left Florence, contain some word or reference to her beloved "Ba," for such was the pet name used between them, with what meaning or origin I know not.

Dear Isa's death was to me an especially sad one, because I thought, and think, that she need not have died. She lived alone with a couple of old servants, and though she was rich in troops of friends, and there were one or two near her during the day or two of her illness, they did not seem to have managed matters wisely. Our Isa was extremely obstinate about calling in medical advice. It could not be done at a moment's notice, for a message had to be sent and a doctor to come from Florence. And

this was not done till the second day of her illness. And I had good reason for thinking that, had she been properly attended to on the first day, her life might have been saved. She would not let her friends send for the doctor, and the friends were unable to make her do so. Unhappily, I was absent for a few days at Siena, and returned to be met by the intelligence that she was dead. It seemed the more sad in that I knew that if I had been there I could have made her call a doctor before it was too late. Browning could also have done so; but it was after the death of Mrs. Browning and his departure from Florence.

How great her sorrow was for the death of her friend, Browning knew, doubtless, but nobody else, I think, in the world save myself.

I have now before me one of her little scraps of letters, in which she encloses one from Mrs. Browning which is of the highest interest. The history and genesis of it is as follows. Shortly after the publication of the well-known and exquisite little poem on the god Pan in the *Cornhill Magazine*, my brother Anthony wrote me a letter venturing to criticise it, in which he says: "The lines are very beautiful, and the working out of the idea is delicious. But I am inclined to think that she is illustrating an allegory by a thought, rather than a thought by an allegory. The idea of the god destroying the reed in making the instrument has, I imagine, given her occasion to declare that in the sublimation of the poet the man is lost for the ordinary purposes of

man's life. It has been thus instead of being the reverse; and I can hardly believe that she herself believes in the doctrine which her fancy has led her to illustrate. A man that can be a poet is so much the more a man in becoming such, and is the more fitted for a man's best work. Nothing is destroyed, and in preparing the instrument for the touch of the musician the gods do nothing for which they need weep. The idea however is beautiful, and it is beautifully worked."

Then follows some verbal criticism which need not be transcribed. Going on to the seventh stanza he says, "In the third line of it, she loses her antithesis. She must spoil her man, as well as make a poet out of him—spoil him as the reed is spoilt. Should we not read the lines thus:—

> "'Yet one half beast is the great god Pan
> Or he would not have laughed by the river.
> Making a poet he mars a man;
> The true gods sigh,' &c."?

In justice to my brother's memory I must say that this was not written to me with any such presumptuous idea as that of offering his criticism to the poetess. But I showed the letter to Isa Blagden, and at her request left it with her. A day or two later, she writes to me: "Dear friend,—I send you back your criticism and Mrs. B.'s rejoinder. She *made* me show it to her, and she wishes you to see her answer." Miss Blagden's words would seem to imply that she thought the criticism mine. And if she did, Mrs. Browning was doubtless led to

suppose so too. Yet I think this could hardly have been the case.

Of course my only object in writing all this here is to give the reader the great treat of seeing Mrs. Browning's "rejoinder." It is very highly interesting :—

"DEAREST ISA,—Very gentle my critic is; I am glad I got him out of you. But tell dear Mr. Trollope he is wrong nevertheless" [here it certainly seems that she supposed the criticism to be mine]; "and that my 'thought' was really and decidedly *anterior* [*sic*] to my 'allegory.' Moreover, it is my thought still. I meant to say that the poetic organisation implies certain disadvantages; for instance an exaggerated general susceptibility, ...[1] which may be shut up, kept out of the way in every-day life, and must be (or the man is '*marred*' indeed, made a Rousseau or a Byron of), but which is necessarily, for all that, cultivated in the very cultivation of art itself. There is an inward reflection and refraction of the heats of life . . .[1] doubling pains and pleasures, doubling therefore the motives (passions) of life. I have said something of this in A.L. [*Aurora Leigh*]. Also there is a passion for essential truth (as apprehended) and a necessity for speaking it out at all risks, inconvenient to personal peace. Add to this and much else the loss of the sweet unconscious cool privacy among the 'reeds' . . . .[1] which I for one care so much for—the

[1] These dots do not indicate any hiatus. They exist in the MS. as here given.

loss of the privilege of being glad or sorry, ill or well, without a 'notice.' That may have its glory to certain minds. But most people would be glad to 'stir their tea in silence' when they are grave, and even to talk nonsense (much too frivolously) when they are merry, without its running the round of the newspapers in two worlds perhaps. You know I don't *invent*, Isa. In fact, I am sorely tempted to send Mr. Trollope a letter I had this morning, as an illustration of my view, and a reply to his criticism. Only this letter among many begins with too many fair speeches. Still it seems written by somebody in earnest and with a liking for me. Its main object is to complain of the cowardly morality in *Pan*. Then a stroke on the poems before Congress. The writer has heard that I 'had been to Paris, was *fêted* by the Emperor, and had had my head turned by Imperial flatteries,' in consequence of which I had taken to 'praise and flatter the tyrant, and try to help his selfish ambition.' Well! one should laugh and be wise. But somehow one doesn't laugh. A letter beginning, 'You are a great teacher of truth,' and ending, 'You are a dishonest wretch,' makes you cold somehow, and ill disposed towards the satisfactions of literary distinction. Yes! and be sure, Isa, that the 'true gods sigh,' and have reason to sigh, for the cost and pain of it; sigh only . . . . don't haggle over the cost; don't grudge a crazia, but . . . . sigh, sigh . . . . while they pay honestly.

"On the other hand, there's much light talking and congratulation, excellent returns to the pocket from the poem in the *Cornhill;* pleasant praise from dear Mr. Trollope . . . . with all drawbacks: a good opinion from Isa worth its gold—and Pan laughs.

"But he is a beast up to the waist; yes, Mr. Trollope, a beast. He is not a true god.

"And I am neither god nor beast, if you please—only a

"BA."

It seems that she certainly imagined me to be the critic; but must have been subsequently undeceived. I will not venture to say a word on the question of the marring or making of a man which results from the creation of a poet; but if my brother had known Mrs. Browning as well as I knew her, he would not have written that he could "hardly believe that she herself believes in the doctrine that her fancy has led her to illustrate." At all events, the divine afflatus had not so marred the absolutely single-minded truthfulness of the woman in her as to make it possible that she should, for the sake of illustrating, however appositely, any fancy however brilliant, put forth a "doctrine" as believing in it, which she did not believe. It may seem that this is a foolish making of a mountain out of a molehill; but she would not have felt it to be so. She had so high a conception of the poet's office and

responsibilities that nothing would have induced her to play at believing for literary purposes any position, or fancy, or imagination, which she did not in her heart of hearts accept.

There was one subject upon which both my wife and I disagreed in opinion with Mrs. Browning; and it was a subject which sat very near her heart, and was much occupying all minds at that time—the phases of Italy's struggle for independence, and especially the part which the Emperor Napoleon the Third was taking in that struggle, and his conduct towards Italy. We were all equally "Italianissimi," as the phrase went then; all equally desirous that Italy should accomplish the union of her *disjecta membra*, throw off the yoke of the bad governments which had oppressed her, make herself a nation, and do well as such. But we differed widely as to the ultimate utility, the probable results, and, above all, as to the motives of the Emperor's conduct. Mrs. Browning believed in him and trusted him. We did neither. Hence the following interesting and curious letter, written to my wife at Florence by Mrs. Browning, who was passing the summer at Siena. Mrs. Browning felt very warmly upon this subject—so indeed did my wife, differing from her *toto cœlo* upon it. But the difference not only never caused the slightest suspension of cordial feeling between them, but never caused either of them to doubt for a moment that the other was with equal sincerity and equal ardour anxious for the same end. The letter was

written, as only the postmark shows, on September 26th, 1859, and was as follows:—

"My dear Mrs. Trollope, — I feel doubly ungrateful to you . . . for the music (one of the proofs of your multiform faculty) and for your kind and welcome letter, which I have delayed to thank you for. My body lags so behind my soul always, and especially of late, that you must consider my disadvantages in whatever fault is committed by me, trying to forgive it.

"Certainly we differ in our estimate of the Italian situation, while loving and desiring for Italy up to the same height and with the same heart.

"For me I persist in looking to *facts* rather than to words official or unofficial, and in repeating that, 'whereas we were bound, now we are free.'

"'I think, therefore, I am.' *Cogito, ergo sum*, was, you know, an old formula. Italy thinks (aloud) at Florence and Bologna; therefore she *is*. And how did that happen? Could it have happened last year, with the Austrians at Bologna, and ready (at a sign) to precipitate themselves into Tuscany? Could it have happened previous to the French intervention? And could it happen *now* if France used the power she has in Italy *against* Italy? Why is it that the *Times* newspaper, which declared . . . first that the elections were to be prevented by France, and next that they were to be tampered with . . . is not justified before our eyes? I appeal to your sober judgment . . . if

indeed the Emperor Napoleon *desires the restoration of the Dukes!!* Is he not all the more admirable for being loyal and holding his hand off while he has fifty thousand men ready to 'protect' us all and prevent the exercise of the people's sovereignty? And he a despot (so called) and accustomed to carry out his desires. Instead of which Tuscans and Romagnoli, Parma and Modena, have had every opportunity allowed them to combine, carry their elections, and express their full minds in assemblies, till the case becomes so complicated and strengthened that her enemies for the most part despair.

"The qualities shown by the Italians—the calm, the dignity, the intelligence, the constancy . . . I am as far from not understanding the weight of these virtues as from not admiring them. But the *opportunity* for exercising them comes from the Emperor Napoleon, and it is good and just for us all to remember this while we admire the most.

"So at least I think; and the Italian official bodies have always admitted it, though individuals seem to me to be too much influenced by the suspicions and calumnies thrown out by foreign journals—English, Prussian, Austrian, and others—which traduce the Emperor's motives in diplomacy, as they traduced them in the war. A prejudice in the eye is as fatal to sight as mote and beam together. And there are things abroad *worse* than any prejudices—yes, worse!

"It is a fact that the Emperor used his influence with England to get the Tuscan vote accepted by the English Government. Whatever wickedness he meant by *that* the gods know; and English statesmen suspect . . . (or suspected a very short short time ago); but the deed itself is not wicked, and you and I shall not be severe on it whatever bad motive may be imputable.

"So much more I could write . . . about Villafranca, but I won't. The Emperor, great man as he is, could not precisely anticipate the high qualities given proof of in the late development of Italian nationality. He made the best terms he could, having had his hand forced. In consequence of this treaty he has carried out his engagement to Austria in certain official forms, knowing well that the free will and choice of the Italians are hindered by none of them; and knowing besides that every apparent coldness and reserve of his towards the peninsula removes a jealousy from England, and instigates her to a more liberal and human bearing than formerly.

"Forgive me for all these words. I am much better, but still not as strong as I was before my attack; only getting strength, I hope.

"Miss Blagden and Miss Field are staying still with us, and are gone to Siena to-day to see certain pictures (which has helped to expose you to this attack). We talk of returning to Florence by the first of October, or soon after, in spite of the revival of fine weather. Mr. Landor is surprisingly

improved by the good air here and the repose of mind; walks two miles, and writes alcaics and pentameters on most days . . . on his domestic circumstances, and . . . I am sorry to say . . . Louis Napoleon. But I tell him that I mean him to write an ode on my side of the question before we have done.

"I honour you and your husband for the good work you have both done on behalf of this great cause. But his book[1] we only know yet by the extracts in the *Athenæum*, which brings us your excellent articles. May I not thank you for them? And when does Mr. Trollope come back?" [from a flying visit to England]. "We hope not to miss him out of Florence long.

"Peni's love to Bice.[2] He has been very happy here, galloping through the lanes on a pony the colour of his curls. Then he helps to work in the vineyards and to keep the sheep, having made close friends with the *contadini*, to whom he reads and explains Dall' Ongaro's poems with great applause By the way, the poet paid us a visit lately, and we liked him much.

"And let me tell *Bice's mother* another story of Penini. He keeps a journal, be it whispered; I ventured to peep through the leaves the other morning, and came to the following notice: 'This is the happiest day of my *hole* (*sic*) life, because dearest Vittorio Emanuele is really *nostro re!*'

[1] *Tuscany in* 1849 *and* 1859.

[2] Browning's boy and my girl.

"There's a true Italian for you! But his weak point is spelling.

"Believe me, with my husband's regards,

"Ever truly and affectionately yours,

"ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING."

It may possibly enter into the mind of some one of those who never enjoyed the privilege of knowing Mrs. Browning the woman, to couple together the stupidly calumnious insinuations to which she refers in the first letter I have given, with the admiration she expresses for the third Napoleon in the second letter. I differed from her wholly in her estimate of the man, and in her views of his policy with regard to Italy. And many an argument have I had with her on the subject. And my opinions respecting it were all the more distasteful to her because they concerned the character of the man himself as well as his policy as a ruler. And those talks and arguments have left me probably the only man alive, save one, who knows with such certainty as I know it, and can assert as I can, the absolute absurdity and impossibility of the idea that she, being what she was, could have been bribed by any amount of Imperial or other flattery, not only to profess opinions which she did not veritably hold —this touches her moral nature, perhaps the most pellucidly truthful of any I ever knew—but to hold opinions which she would not have otherwise held. This touches her intellectual nature, which was as incapable of being mystified or modified by any

suggestion of vanity, self-love, or gratified pride, as the most judicial-minded judge who ever sat on the bench. Her intellectual view on the matter *was*, I thought, mystified and modified by the intensity of her love for the Italian cause, and of her hatred for the evils from which she was watching the Italians struggling to liberate themselves.

I heard, probably from herself, of whispered calumnies, such as those she refers to in the first of the two letters given. She despised them then, as those who loved and valued her did, though the sensitive womanly gentleness of her nature made it a pain to her that any fellow-creature, however ignorant and far away from her, should so think of her. And my disgust at a secret attempt to stab has impelled me to say what I *know* on the subject. But I really think that not only those who knew her as she lived in the flesh, but the tens of thousands who know her as she lives in her written words, cannot but feel my vindication superfluous.

The above long and specially interesting letter is written in very small characters on ten pages of extremely small duodecimo note-paper, as is also the other letter by the same writer given above. Mrs. Browning's handwriting shows ever and anon an odd tendency to form each letter of a word separately—a circumstance which I mention for the sake of remarking that old Huntingford, the Bishop of Hereford, in my young days, between whom and Mrs. Browning there was one thing in common,

namely, a love for and familiarity with Greek studies, used to write in the same manner.

The Dall' Ongaro here spoken of was an old friend of ours—of my wife's, if I remember right—before our marriage. He was a Venetian, or rather to speak accurately, I believe, a Dalmatian by birth, but all his culture and sympathies were Venetian. He had in his early youth been destined for the priesthood, but like many another had been driven by the feelings and sympathies engendered by Italy's political struggles to abandon the tonsure for the sake of joining the "patriot" cause. His muse was of the drawing-room school and calibre. But he wrote very many charming little poems breathing the warmest aspirations of the somewhat extreme *gauche* of that day, especially some *stornelli* after the Tuscan fashion, which met with a very wide and warm acceptance. I remember one extremely happy, the *refrain* of which still runs in my head. It is written on the newly-adopted Italian tricolour flag. After characterising each colour separately in a couplet, he ends :—

> "*E il rosso, il bianco, e il verde,*
> *È un terno che si giuoca, e non si perde.*"

The phrase is borrowed from the language of the lottery. "And the red, and the white, and the green, are a threefold combination" [I am obliged to be horribly prosaic in order to make the allusion intelligible to non-Italian ears!] "on which we may play and be sure not to lose!"

I am tempted to give here another of Mrs. Browning's letters to my first wife, partly by the persuasion that any letter of hers must be a matter of interest to a very large portion of English readers, and partly for the sake of the generously appreciative criticism of one of my brother's books, which I also always considered to be one of his best. I must add that Mrs. Browning's one bit of censure coincides as perfectly with my own judgment. The letter as usual is dateless, but must have been written very shortly after the publication of my brother's novel called *The Three Clerks.*

"My dear Mrs. Trollope,—I return *The Three Clerks* with our true thanks and appreciation. We both quite agree with you in considering it the best of the three clever novels before the public. My husband, who can seldom get a novel to hold him, has been held by all three, and by this the strongest. Also it has qualities which the others gave no sign of. For instance, I was wrung to tears by the third volume. What a thoroughly *man's* book it is! I much admire it, only wishing away, with a vehemence which proves the veracity of my general admiration, the contributions to the *Daily Delight*—may I dare to say it?

"I do hope you are better. For myself, I have not suffered more than was absolutely necessary in the late unusual weather.

"I heard with concern that Mrs. Trollope" [my

mother] "has been less well than usual. But who can wonder, with such cold?

"Most truly yours,

"ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

"*Casa Guidi, Wednesday.*"

Here is also one other little memorial, written not by "Elizabeth Barrett Browning," but by "Elizabeth Barrett." It is interesting on more than one account. It bears no date, save "Beacon Terrace [Torquay], Thursday." But it evidently marks the beginning of acquaintanceship between the two exceptionally, though not equally gifted girls—Elizabeth Barrett and Theodosia Garrow. It is written on a sheet of the very small duodecimo note paper which she was wont to use many years subsequently, but in far more delicate and elegant characters than she used, when much pen-work had produced its usual deteriorating effect on her caligraphy.

"I cannot return the *Book of Beauty*" [Lady Blessington's annual] "to Miss Garrow without thanking her for allowing me to read in it sooner than I should otherwise have done, those contributions of her own which help to justify its title, and which are indeed sweet and touching verses.

"It is among the vexations brought upon me by my illness, that I still remain personally unacquainted with Miss Garrow, though seeming to myself to know her through those who actually do so. And I should venture to hope that it might

be a vexation the first to leave me, if a visit to an invalid condemned to the *peine forte et dure* of being very silent, notwithstanding her womanhood, were a less gloomy thing. At any rate I am encouraged to thank Miss Fisher and Miss Garrow for their visits of repeated inquiry, and their other very kind attentions, by these written words, rather than by a message. For I am sure that wherever kindness *can* come thankfulness *may*, and that whatever intrusion my note can be guilty of, it is excusable by the fact of my being Miss Garrow's

"Sincerely obliged,

"E. BARRETT."

Could anything be more charmingly girlish, or more prettily worded! The diminutive little note seems to have been preserved, an almost solitary survival of the memorials of the days to which it belongs. It must doubtless have been followed by sundry others, but was, I suppose, specially treasured as having been the first step towards a friendship which was already highly valued.

Of course, in the recollections of an Englishman living during those years in Florence, Robert Browning must necessarily stand out in high relief, and in the foremost line. But very obviously this is neither the time nor the place, nor is my dose of presumption sufficient for any attempt at a delineation of the man. To speak of the poet, since I write for Englishmen, would be very superfluous. It may be readily imagined that the "tag-rag and

bob-tail" of the men who mainly constituted that very pleasant but not very intellectual society, were not likely to be such as Mr. Browning would readily make intimates of. And I think I see in memory's magic glass that the men used to be rather afraid of him. Not that I ever saw him rough or uncourteous with the most exasperating fool that ever rubbed a man's nervous system the wrong way; but there was a quiet, lurking smile which, supported by very few words, used to seem to have the singular property of making the utterers of platitudes and the mistakers of *non-sequiturs* for *sequiturs*, uncomfortably aware of the nature of their words within a very few minutes after they had uttered them. I may say, however, that I believe that in any dispute on any sort of subject between any two men in the place, if it had been proposed to submit the matter in dispute for adjudication to Mr. Browning, the proposal would have been jumped at with a greater readiness of *consensus* than in the case of any other man there.

CHAPTER XI.

THE Italians, I believe, were "thinking" at a considerably earlier period than that which in the second letter transcribed in the preceding chapter Mrs. Browning seems to have considered as the beginning of their "cogitating" existence, and thinking on the subjects to which she is there adverting. They were "thinking," perhaps, less in Tuscany than in any other part of the peninsula, for they were eating more and better there. They were very lightly taxed. The *mezzeria* system of agriculture, which, if not absolutely the same, is extremely similar to that which is known as "conacre," rendered the lot of the peasant population very far better and more prosperous than that of the tillers of the earth in any of the other provinces. And upon the whole the people were contented. The Tuscan public was certainly not a "pensive public." They ate their bread not without due condiment of *compagnatico*,[1] or even

[1] Anything to make the bread "go down," as our people say—a morsel of bacon or sausage, a handful of figs or grapes, or a bit of cheese.

their chesnuts in the more remote and primitive mountain districts, drank their sound Tuscan wine from the generous big-bellied Tuscan flasks holding three good bottles, and sang their *stornelli* in cheerfulness of heart, and had no craving whatsoever for those few special liberties which were denied them.

Epicuri de grege porci! No progress! Yes, I know all that, and am not saying what should have been, but what was. There *was* no progress! The *contadini* on the little farm which I came to possess before I left Tuscany cultivated it precisely after the fashion of their grandfathers and great-grandfathers, and strenuously resisted any suggestion that it could, should, or might be cultivated in any other way. But my *contadino* inhabited a large and roomy *casa colonica;* he and his buxom wife, had six stalwart sons, and was the richer man in consequence of having them. No, in my early Florentine days the *cogito, ergo sum* could not have been predicated of the Tuscans.

But the condition of things in the other states of the peninsula, in Venice and Lombardy under the Austrians, in Naples under the Bourbon kings, in Romagna under the Pope, and very specially in Modena under its dukes of the House of Este, was much otherwise. In those regions the Italians were "thinking" a great deal, and had been thinking for some time past. And somewhere about 1849, those troublesome members of the body social who are not contented with eating, drinking, and

singing—cantankerous reading and writing people living in towns, who wanted most unreasonably to say, as the phrase goes, that "their souls were their own" (as if such fee-simple rights ever fall to the lot of any man!)—began in Tuscany to give signs that they also were "thinking."

I remember well that Albèri, the highly accomplished and learned editor of the *Reports of the Venetian Ambassadors*, and of the great edition of Galileo's works, was the first man who opened my altogether innocent eyes to the fact, that the revolutionary leaven was working in Tuscany, and that there were social breakers ahead! This must have been as early as 1845, or possibly 1844. Albèri himself was a Throne-and-Altar man, who thought for his part, that the amount of proprietorship over his own soul which the existing *régime* allowed him was enough for his purposes. But, as he confided to me, a very strong current of opinion was beginning to run the other way in Florence, in Leghorn, in Lucca, and many smaller cities—not in Siena, which always was, and is still, a nest of conservative feeling.

Nevertheless there never was, at least in Florence, the strength and bitterness of revolutionary feeling that existed almost everywhere else throughout Italy. I remember a scene which furnished a very remarkable proof of this, and which was at the same time very curiously and significantly characteristic of the Florentine character, at least as it then existed.

It was during the time of the Austrian occupation of Florence. On the whole the Austrian troops behaved well; and their doings, and the spirit in which the job they had in hand was carried out, were very favourably contrasted with the tyranny, the insults, and the aggressive arrogance, with which the French army of occupation afflicted the Romans. The Austrians accordingly were never hated in Florence with the bitter intensity of hate which the French earned in the Eternal City. Nevertheless, there were now and then occasions when the Florentine populace gratified their love of a holiday and testified to the purity of their Italian patriotism by turning out into the streets and kicking up a row.

It was on an occasion of this sort, that the narrow street called Por' Santa Maria, which runs up from the Ponte Vecchio to the Piazza, was thickly crowded with people. A young lieutenant had been sent to that part of the town with a small detachment of cavalry to clear the streets. Judging from the aspect of the people, as his men, coming down the Lung' Arno, turned into the narrow street, he did not half like the job before him. He thought there certainly would be bloodshed. And just as his men were turning the corner and beginning to push their horses into the crowd, one of them slipped sideways on the flagstones, with which, most distressingly to horses not used to them, the streets of Florence are paved, and came down with his rider partly under him.

The officer thought, "Now for trouble! That man will be killed to a certainty!" The crowd—who were filling the air with shouts of "*Morte!*" "*Abbasso l'Austria!*" "*Morte agli Austriaci!*"[1]—crowded round the fallen trooper, while the officer tried to push forward towards the spot. But when he got within earshot, and could see also what was taking place, he saw the people immediately round the fallen man busily disengaging him from his horse! "*O poverino! Ti sei fatto male? Orsu! Non sara niente! Su! A cavallo, eh?*"[2] And having helped the man to remount, they returned to their amusement of roaring "*Morte agli Austriaci!*" The young officer perceived that he had a very different sort of populace to deal with from an angry crowd on the other side of the Alps, or indeed on the other side of the Apennines.

I remember another circumstance which occurred a few years previously to that just mentioned, and which was in its way equally characteristic. In one of the principal *cafés* of Florence, situated on the Piazza del Duomo—the cathedral yard—a murder was committed. The deed was done in full daylight, when the *café* was full of people. Such crimes, and indeed violent crimes of any sort, were exceedingly rare in Florence. That in question was committed by stabbing, and the motive of the criminal who had come to Florence for the express purpose

[1] "Death! Down with Austria! Death to the Austrians!"

[2] "Oh! Poor fellow! Have you hurt yourself? Up with you! It will be nothing! Up again on your horse, eh?"

of killing his enemy was vengeance for a great wrong. Having accomplished his purpose he quietly walked out of the *café* and went away. I happened to be on the spot shortly afterwards, and inquired, with some surprise at the escape of the murderer, why he had not been arrested red-handed. "He had a sword in his hand!" said the person to whom I had addressed myself, in a tone which implied that that quite settled the matter—that of course it was absolutely out of the question to attempt to interfere with a man who had a sword in his hand!

It is a very singular thing, and one for which it is difficult to offer any satisfactory explanation, that the change in Florence in respect to the prevalence of crime has been of late years very great indeed. I have mentioned more than once, I think, the very remarkable absence of all crimes of violence which characterised Florence in the earlier time of my residence there. It was not due to rigorous repression or vigilance of the police, as may be partly judged by the above anecdote. There was, in fact, *no* police that merited the name. But anything in the nature of burglary was unheard of. The streets were so absolutely safe that any lady might have traversed them alone at any hour of the day or night. And I might add to the term "crimes of violence" the further statement that pocket-picking was equally unheard of.

Now there is perhaps more crime of a heinous character in Florence, in proportion to the population,

than in any city in the peninsula. I think that about the first indication that all that glittered in the mansuetude of *Firenze la Gentile* was not gold, showed itself on the occasion of an attempt to naturalise at Florence the traditional sportiveness of the Roman Carnival. There and then, as all the world knows, it has been the immemorial habit for the population, high and low, to pelt the folks in the carriages during their Corso procession with *bonbons*, *bouquets*, and the like. Gradually at Rome this exquisite fooling has degenerated under the influence of modern notions, till the *bouquets* having become cabbage stalks, very effective as offensive missiles, and the *bonbons* plaster of Paris pellets, with an accompanying substitution of a spiteful desire to inflict injury for the old horse-play, it has become necessary to limit the duration of the Saturnalia to the briefest span, with the sure prospect of its being very shortly altogether prohibited. But at Florence on the first occasion, now several years ago, of an attempt to imitate the Roman practice, the conduct of the populace was such as to demand imperatively the immediate suppression of it. The carriages and the occupants of them were attacked by such volleys of stones and mud, and the animus of the people was so evidently malevolent and dangerous, that they were at once driven from the scene, and any repetition of the practice was forbidden.

It is so remarkable as to be, at all events, worth noting, that contemporaneously with this singular

deterioration in respect to crime, another social change has taken place in Florence. *La Gentile Firenze* has of late years become very markedly the home of clericalism of a high and aggressive type. This is an entirely new feature in the Florentine social world. In the old time clerical views were sufficiently supported by the Government to give rise to the famous Madiai incident, which has been before alluded to. But clericalism in its more aggressive aspects was not in the ascendant either bureaucratically or socially. The spirit which had informed the policy and government of the famous Leopoldine laws was still sufficiently alive in the mental habitudes of both governors and governed to render Tuscany a rather suspected and disliked region in the mind of the Vatican and of the secular governments which sympathised with the Vatican's views and sentiments. The change that has taken place is therefore a very notable one. I have no such sufficiently intimate knowledge of the subject as would justify me in linking together the two changes I have noticed in the connection of cause and effect. I only note the synchronism.

On the other hand there are not wanting sociologists who maintain that the cause of the outburst of lawlessness and crime which has undeniably characterised Florence of late years is to be sought for exactly in that old-time, easy-going tolerance in religious matters, which they say is now producing a tardy but sure crop from seeds that, however long in disclosing the true nature of the harvest to be

expected from them, ought never to have been expected by wise legislators to produce any other.

Non nostrum est tantas componere lites! But Florence is certainly no longer *Firenze la Gentile*, as she so eminently was in the days when I knew her so well.

Whether any of the other cities of Italy have in any degree ceased to merit the traditional epithets which so many successive generations assigned to them—how far Genoa is still *la Superba*, Bologna *la Grassa*, Padua *la Dotta*, Lucca *la Industriosa*—I cannot say. Venezia is unquestionably still *la Bella*. And as for old Rome, she vindicates more than ever her title to the epithet *Eterna*, by her similitude to those nursery toys which, throw them about as you will, still with infallible certitude come down heads uppermost.

As for the Florence of my old recollections, there were in the early days of them many little old-world sights and sounds which are to be seen and heard no longer, and which differentiated the place from other social centres.

I remember a striking incident of this sort which happened to my mother and myself "in the days before the flood," therefore very shortly after our arrival there.

It was the practice in those days to carry the bodies of the dead on open biers, with uncovered faces, to their burial. It had doubtless been customary in old times so to carry all the dead; but the custom was retained at the time of which I am

writing only in the case of distinguished persons, and very generally of the priesthood. I remember, for instance, a poor little humpbacked Grand Duchess being so carried through the street magnificently bedecked as if she were going to a ball, and with painted cheeks. She had been a beneficent little body, and the people, as far as they knew anything about her, revered her, and looked on her last presentation to them with sympathetic feelings. But it was a sorry sight to see the poor little body, looking much like a bedizened monkey, so paraded.

Well, my mother and I were, aimlessly but much admiringly, wandering about the vast spaces of the cathedral when we became aware of a *funzione* of some sort—a service as we should say—being conducted in a far part of the building. There was no great crowd, but a score or two of spectators, mainly belonging to the *gamin* category, were standing around the officiating priests and curiously looking on. We went towards the spot, and found that the burial service was being performed over the body of a young priest. The body lay on its back on the open bier, clad in full canonicals and with the long tasselled cap of the secular clergy on his head. We stood and gazed with the others, when suddenly I saw the dead man's head slightly move! A shiver, I confess, ran through me. A moment's reflection, however, reminded me of the recognised deceitfulness of the eyes in such matters, and I did not doubt that I had been mistaken. But the next minute I again saw the dead priest slightly shake his head,

and this time I was sure that I was not mistaken. I clutched my mother's arm and pointed, and again saw the awful phenomenon, which sent a cold wave through both of us from head to foot. But nobody save ourselves seemed to have seen anything unusual. The service was proceeding in its wonted order. Doubting whether it might possibly be one of those horrible cases of suspended animation and mistaken death, I was thinking whether it were not my duty to call attention to the startling thing we had seen, and had with outstretched neck and peering eyes advanced a step for further observation, and with the half-formed purpose of declaring aloud that the man was not dead, when I spied crouched beneath the bier a little monkey, some nine or ten years old, who had taken in his hand the tassel of the cap, which hung down between the wooden bars which formed the bier, and was amusing himself with slowly swaying it forwards and backwards, and had thus communicated the motion to the dead man's head! It was almost impossible to believe that the little urchin had been able to reach the position he occupied without having been observed by any of the clerical attendants, of whom several were present, and still more difficult to suppose that no one of them had seen what we saw, standing immediately in front of the corpse while one of them performed the rite of lustration with holy water, the vessel containing which was held by another. But no one interfered, and none but those who know the Florentines as well as I know them can feel how

curiously and intensely characteristic of them was the fact that no one did so. The awful reverence for death which would have impelled an Englishman of almost any social position to feel indignation and instantly put a stop to what he would consider a profanation, was absolutely unknown to all those engaged in that perfunctory rite. A certain amount of trouble and disturbance would have been caused by dislodging the culprit, and each man there felt only this ; that it didn't matter a straw, and that there was no reason for *him* to take the trouble of noticing it. As far as I could observe, the amusement the little wretch derived from his performance was entirely unsocial, and confined to his own breast; for I could not see that any of the *gamin* fraternity noticed it, or cared about it, any more than their seniors.

I remember another somewhat analogous adventure of mine, equally illustrative of the Florentine habits of those days. I saw a man suddenly stagger and fall in the street. It was in the afternoon, and there were many persons in the street, some of them nearer to the fallen man than I was, but nobody attempted to help him. I stepped forward to do so, and was about to take hold of him and try to raise him, when one of the by-standers eagerly caught me by the arm, saying, "He is dying, he is dying!" "Let us try to raise him," said I, still pressing forward. "You mustn't, you mustn't! It is not permitted," he added, as he perceived that he was speaking to a foreigner, and then went on to explain to me that what must be done was to call the

Misericordia, for which purpose one must run and ring a certain bell attached to the chapel of that brotherhood in the Piazza del Duomo.

Among the many things that have been written of the Florentine Misericordia, I do not think that I have met with the statement that it used to be universally believed in Florence that the law gave the black brethren the privilege and the monopoly of picking up any dying or dead person in the streets, and that it was forbidden to any one else to do so. Whether any such *law* really existed I much doubt, but the custom of acting in accordance with it, and the belief that such practice was imperative, undoubtedly did. And I have no doubt that many a life has been sacrificed to it. The half hour or twenty minutes which necessarily elapsed before the Misericordia could be called and answer the call, must often have been supremely important, and in many cases ought to have been employed in the judicious use of the lancet.

The sight of the black robed and black cowled brethren, as they went about the streets on their errands of mercy, was common enough in Florence. But the holiday visitor had very little opportunity of hearing anything of the internal management and rules of that peculiar mediæval society or of the nature of the work it did.

The Florentine Misericordia was founded in the days when pestilence was ravaging the city so fiercely that the dead lay uncared for in the

streets, because there was no man sufficiently courageous to bury or to touch them. The members of the association, which was formed for the performance of this charitable and arduous duty, chose for themselves a costume, the object of which was the absolute concealment of the individual performing it. A loose black linen gown drapes the figure from the neck to the heels, and a black cowl, with two holes cut for the eyes, covers and effectually conceals the head and face. For more than five hundred years, up to the present day, the dress remains the same, and no human being, either of those to whom their services are rendered, or of the thousands who see them going about in the performance of their self-imposed duty, can know whether the mysterious weird-looking figure he sees be prince or peasant. He knows that he may be either, for the members of the brotherhood are drawn from all classes of society.

It used to be whispered, and I have good reasons for believing the whisper to have been true, that the late Grand Duke was a member, and took his turn of duty with his brethren. Some indiscreet personal attendant blabbed the secret, for assuredly the Duke himself was never untrue to the oath which binds the members to secrecy.

The whole society is divided into a number of companies, one of which is by turns on duty. There is a large, most melancholy and ominously sounding bell in the chapel of the brotherhood (not that already mentioned by which anybody

can call the attention of the brother in permanent attendance, but a much larger one), which is heard all over the city. This summons the immediate attendance of every member of the company on duty, and the mysterious black figures may any day be seen hurrying to the rendezvous. There they learn the nature of the call, and the place at which their presence is required.

I remember the case of an English girl who was fearfully burned at a villa at some little distance from the city. The injuries were so severe that, while it was extremely desirable that she should be removed to a hospital, there was much doubt as to the possibility of moving her. In this difficulty the Misericordia were summoned. They came, five or six of them, bringing with them their too well known black covered litter, and transported the patient to the hospital, lifting her from her bed and placing her in the litter with an exquisitely delicate and skilled gentleness of handling which spared her suffering to the utmost, and excited the surprise and admiration of the English medical man who witnessed the operation. Every part of the work, every movement, was executed in absolute silence and with combined obedience to signalled orders from the leader of the company.

Another case which was brought under my notice was that of a woman suffering from dropsy, which made the necessary removal of her a very arduous and difficult operation. It would probably have been deemed impossible save by the assistance of

the Misericordia, who managed so featly and deftly that those who saw it marvelled at the skill and accurately co-operating force, which nothing but long practice could have made possible.

It is a law of the brotherhood, never broken, that they are to accept nothing, not so much as a glass of water, in any house to which they are called. The Florentines well know how much they owe as a community, and how much each man may some day come to owe personally to the Misericordia; and when the doleful clang of their well known bell is heard booming over the city, women may be seen to cross themselves with a muttered prayer, while men, ashamed of their religiosity, but moved by feeling as well as habit, will furtively do the same.

There is an association at Rome copied from that at Florence, and vowed to the performance of very similar duties. I once had an opportunity of seeing the registers of this Roman Misericordia, and was much impressed by the frequently recurring entry of excursions into the Campagna to bring in the corpses of men murdered and left there!

CHAPTER XII.

AMONG the other things that contributed to make those Florence days very pleasant ones, we did a good deal in the way of private theatricals. Our *impresario*, at least in the earlier part of the time, was Arthur Vansittart. He engaged the Cocomero Theatre for our performances, and to the best of my remembrance defrayed the whole of the expense out of his own pocket. Vansittart was an exceptionally tall man, a thread-paper of a man, and a very bad actor. He was exceedingly noisy, and pushed vivacity to its extreme limits. I remember well his appearance in some play—I fancy it was in *The Road to Ruin*, in which I represented some character, I entirely forget what —where he comes on with a four-in-hand whip in his hand; and I remember, too, that for the other performers in that piece, their appearance on the stage was a service of danger, from which the occupants of the stage boxes were not entirely free. But he was inexhaustibly good-natured and good-humoured, and gave us excellent suppers after the performance.

Then there was Edward Hobhouse, with—more or less with—his exceedingly pretty and clever wife, and her sister, the not at all pretty but still more clever and very witty Miss Graves. Hobhouse was a man abounding in talent of all sorts, extremely witty, brim full of humour, a thorough good fellow and very popular. He and his wife, though very good friends did not entirely pull together; and it used to be told of him, that replying to a man, who asked him "How's your wife?" he answered with much humorous semblance of indignation, "Well! if you come to that, how's yours?" Hobhouse was far and away the cleverest and best educated man of the little set (these dramatic reminiscences refer to the early years of my Florence life), and in truth was somewhat regrettably wasted in the midst of such a frivolous and idle community. But I take it that he was much of an invalid.

Of course we got up *The Rivals*. I was at first Bob Acres, with an Irishman of the name of Torrens for my Sir Lucius, which he acted, when we could succeed in keeping him sober, to the life. My Bob Acres was not much of a success. And I subsequently took Sir Anthony, which remained my stock part for years, and which I was considered to do well.

Sir Francis Vincent, a resident in Florence for many years, with whom I was for several of them very intimate, played the ungrateful part of Falkland. He was a heavy actor with fairly

good elocution and delivery, and not unfitted for a part which it might have been difficult to fill without him. He was to a great degree a reading man, and had a considerable knowledge of the byeways of Florentine history.

My mother "brought the house down" nightly as Mrs. Malaprop; and a very exceptionally beautiful Madame de Parcieu (an Englishwoman married to a Frenchman) was in appearance, *manière d'être*, and deportment the veritable *beau idéal* of Lydia Languish, and might have made *a furore* on any stage, if it had been possible to induce her to raise her voice sufficiently. She was most good-naturedly amenable. But when she was thus driven against her nature and habits to speak out, all the excellence of her acting was gone. The meaning of the words was taken out of them.

Sir Anthony Absolute became, as I said, my stock part. And the phrase is justified by my having acted it many years afterwards in a totally different company—I the only remaining brick of the old edifice—and to audiences not one of whom could have witnessed the performances of those earlier days. Mrs. Richie, an American lady—who had, I think, been known on a London stage under the name of "Mowatt"—was in those latter days, now so far away in the dim past, our manageress. Mrs. Proby, the wife, now I am sorry to say the widow, of the British Consul, was on that occasion our Mrs. Malaprop, and was an excellent representative of that popular lady, though

she will, I am sure, forgive me for saying not so perfect a one as my mother.

Quite indescribably strange is the effect on my mind of looking back at my three Thespian avatars — Falstaff at Cincinnati, Acres and Sir Anthony in Grand Ducal Florence, and Sir Anthony again in a liberated Tuscany! I seem to myself like some old mail-coach guard, who goes through the whole long journey, while successive coachmen "Leave you here, sir!" But then in my case the passengers are all changed too; and I arrive at the end of the journey without one "inside" or "outside" of those who started with me! I can still blow my horn cheerily, however, and chat with the passengers, who joined the coach when my journey was half done, as if they were quite old fellow travellers!

It must not be imagined, however, that that pleasant life at Florence was all cakes and ale.

I was upon the whole a hard worker. I wrote a series of volumes on various portions of Italian, and especially Florentine, history, beginning with *The Girlhood of Catherine de Medici.* They were all fairly well received, the *Life of Filippo Strozzi* perhaps the most so. But the volume on the story of the great quarrel between the Papacy and Venice, entitled *Paul the Pope and Paul the Friar*, was, I think, the best. The volumes entitled *A Decade of Italian Women*, and dealing with ten typical historic female figures, has attained, I believe, to some share of public favour. I see it not unfrequently quoted

by writers on Italian subjects. Then I made a more ambitious attempt, and produced a *History of the Commonwealth of Florence*, in four volumes.

Such a work appeals, of course, to a comparatively limited audience. But that it was recognised to have some value among certain Anglo-Saxons whose favourable judgment in the matter was worth having, may be gathered from the fact that it has been a text-book in our own and in transatlantic universities; while a verdict perhaps still more flattering (though I will not say more gratifying) was given by Professor Pasquale Villari (now senator of the kingdom of Italy), who, in a letter in my possession, pronounces my history of Florence to be in his opinion the best work on the subject extant.

Professor Villari is not only an accomplished scholar of a wide range of culture, but his praise of any work on Italian—and perhaps especially on Tuscan—history comes from no "prentice han'." His masterly *Life of Macchiavelli* is as well known in our country as in his own, through the translation of it into English by his gifted wife, Linda Villari, whilom Linda White, and my very valued friend. All these historical books were written *con amore*. The study of bygone Florentines had an interest for me which was quickened by the daily and hourly study of living Florentines. It was curious to mark in them resemblances of character, temperament, idiosyncrasy, defects, and merits, to those of their forefathers who move and breathe before us in the

pages of such old chroniclers as Villani, Segni, Varchi, and the rest, and in sundry fire-graven strophes and lines of their mighty poet. Dante's own local and limited characteristics, as distinguished from the universality of his poetic genius, have always seemed to me quintessentially Tuscan.

Of course it is among the lower orders that such traits are chiefly found, and among the lower orders in the country more than those in the towns. But there is, or was, for I speak of years ago, a considerable conservative pride in their own inherited customs and traditions common to all classes.

Especially this is perceived in the speech of the genuine Florentine. Quaint proverbs, not always of scrupulous refinement, old-world phrases, local allusions, are stuffed into the conversation of your real citizen or citizeness of *Firenze la Gentile* as thickly as the beads in the *vezzo di corallo* on the neck of a *contadina*. And above all, the accent—the soft (not to say slobbering) *c* and *g*, and the guttural aspirate which turns *casa* into *hasa* and *capitale* into *hapitale*, and so forth—this is cherished with peculiar fondness. I have heard a young, elegant, and accomplished woman discourse in very choice Italian with the accent of a market-woman, and on being remonstrated with for the use of some very pungent proverbial illustration in her talk, she replied with conviction, "That is the right way to speak Tuscan. I have nothing to do with what Italians from other provinces may prefer. But pure, racy Tuscan—the Tuscan tongue that we

have inherited—is spoken as I speak it—or ought to be!"

I had gathered together, partly for my own pleasure, and partly in the course of historical researches, a valuable collection of works on *Storia Patria*, which were sold by me when I gave up my house there. The reading of Italian, even very crabbed and ancient Italian which might have puzzled more than one "elegant scholar," became quite easy and familiar to me, but I have never attained a colloquial mastery over the language. I can talk, to be sure, with the most incorrect fluency, and I can make myself understood—at all events by Italians, whose quick, sympathetic apprehension of one's meaning, and courteous readiness to assist a foreigner in any linguistic straits, are deserving of grateful recognition from all of us who, however involuntarily, maltreat their beautiful language.

But the colloquial use of a language must be acquired when the organs are young and lissom. I began too late. And besides, I have laboured under the great disadvantage that my deafness prevents me from sharing in the hourly lessons which those who hear all that is going on around them profit by.

Besides the above-mentioned historical works, I wrote well nigh a score, I think, of novels, which also had no great, but a fair, share of success. The majority of them are on Italian subjects; and these, if I may be allowed to say so, are good. The pictures

they give of Italian men and women and things and habits are true, vivid, and accurate. Those which I wrote on English subjects are unquestionably bad. I had been living the best part of a life-time out of England ; I knew but little comparatively of English life, and I had no business to meddle with such subjects. But besides all this, I was always writing in periodical publications of all sorts, English and American, to such an extent that I should think the bulk of it, if brought together, would exceed that of all the many volumes I am answerable for. No! my life in that Castle of Indolence—Italy—was not a *far-niente* one!

We were great at picnics in those Florence days. Perhaps the most favourite place of all for such parties was Pratolino, a park belonging to the Grand Duke, about seven miles from Florence, on the Bologna road. These seven miles wave almost all more or less up hill, and when the high ground on which the park is situated has been reached, there is a magnificent view over the Val d'Arno, its thousand villas, and Florence, with its circle of surrounding hills.

There was once a grand ducal residence there, which was famous in the later Medicean days for the multiplicity and ingenuity of its water-works. All kinds of surprises, picturesque and grotesque effects, and practical jokes, had been prepared by the ingenious, but somewhat childish skill of the architect. Turning the handle of a door would produce a shower-bath, sofas would become suddenly

boats surrounded by water, and such like more or less disagreeable surprises to visitors, who were new to the specialties of the place. But all this practical joking was at length fatal to the scene of it. The pipes and conduits got out of order, and eventually so ruined the edifice that it had to be taken down, and has never been replaced.

But the principal object of attraction—besides the view, the charming green turf for dining on, the facility for getting hot water, plates, glasses, &c., from a gardener's house, and a large hall in the same, good for dancing—was the singular colossal figure, representing "The Apennine," said to have been designed by Michael Angelo. One used to clamber up inside this figure, which sits in a half crouching attitude, and reach on the top of the head a platform, on which four or five persons could stand and admire the matchless view.

About three miles further, still always ascending the slope of the Apennine, is a Servite monastery which is the cradle and mother establishment of the order. Sometimes we used to extend our rambles thither. The brethren had the reputation, I remember, of possessing a large and valuable collection of prints. They were not very willing to exhibit it; but I did once succeed in examining it, and, as I remember, found that it contained nothing much worth looking at.

A much more favourite amusement of mine was a picnic arranged to last for two or three days, and intended to embrace objects further afield.

Vallombrosa was a favourite and admirably well selected locality for this purpose. And many a day and moonlight night never to be forgotten, have I spent there. Sometimes we pushed our expeditions to the more distant convents—or "Sanctuaries" as they were called—of Camaldoli and Lavernia. And of one very memorable excursion to these two places I shall have to speak in a subsequent chapter.

Meantime those dull mutterings as of distant thunder, which Signor Albèri had, as mentioned at a former page, first signalised to me, were gradually growing into a roar which was attracting the attention and lively interest of all Europe.

Of the steady increase in the volume of this roar, and of the results in which it eventuated, I need say little here, for I have already said enough in a volume entitled *Tuscany in* 1849 *and in* 1859. But I may jot down a few recollections of the culminating day of the Florentine revolution.

I had been out from an early hour of that morning, and had assisted at sundry street discussions of the question, What would the troops do? Such troops as were in Florence were mainly lodged in the forts, the Fortezza da Basso, which I have had occasion to mention in a former chapter, and the other situated on the high ground beyond the Boboli Gardens, and therefore immediately above the Pitti Palace. My house at the corner of the large square, now the Piazza dell Indipendenza, was almost immediately under the walls and the guns of the Fortezza da

Basso; but I felt sure that the troops would simply do nothing; might very possibly fraternise with the people; but would in no case burn a cartridge for the purpose of keeping the Grand Duke on his throne.

A short wide street runs in a straight line from the middle of one side of the Piazza to the fort; and a considerable crowd of people, at about ten o'clock, I think, began to advance slowly up this street towards the *fortezza*, and I went with them. High above our heads on the turf-covered top of the lofty wall, there were a good number, perhaps thirty or forty soldiers, not drawn up in line, but apparently merely lounging and enjoying the air and sunshine. They had, I think all of them, their muskets in their hands, but held them idly and with apparently no thought whatever of using them. I felt confirmed in my opinion that they had no intention of doing so.

Arrived at the foot of the fortress wall, the foremost of the people began calling out to the soldiers, "*Abbasso l'Austria! Siete per Italia o per l'Austria?*" I did not—and it is significant—hear any cries of "*Abbasso il Gran Duca!*" The soldiers, as far as I could see at that distance, appeared to be lazily laughing at the people. One man called out "*Ecco un bel muro per fracassare il capo contro!*"—"That is an excellent wall to break your heads against!" It was very plain that they had no intention of making any hostile demonstration against the crowd. At the same time there was no sort of manifestation

of any inclination to fraternise with the revolutionists. They were simply waiting to see how matters would go; and under the circumstances they can hardly be severely blamed for doing so. But there can be no doubt that, whichever way things might go, their view of the matter would be strongly influenced by the very decided opinion that that course would be best which should not imply the necessity for *doing* anything. I think that the feeling generally in "the army," if such it could be called, was on the whole kindly to the Grand Duke, but not to the extent of being willing to fight anybody, least of all the Florentines, in his defence!

How matters *did* go it is not necessary to tell here. If ever there was a revolution "made with rose-water," it was the revolution which deposed the poor *gran ciuco*. I don't think it cost any human being in all Florence a scratch or a bloody nose. It cost an enormous amount of talking and screaming, but nothing else. At the same time it is fair to remember that the popular leaders could not be sure that matters might not have taken another turn, and that it *might* have gone hard with some of them. In any case, however, it would not have gone *very* hard with any of them. Probably exile would have been the worst fate meted out to them. It is true that exile from Tuscany just then would have been attended by a similar difficulty to that which caused the old Scotch lady, when urged to run during an earthquake, to reply, "Ay! but whar wull I run to?"

I do not think there was any bitter, or much even unkind, feeling on the part of the citizens towards the sovereign against whom they rebelled. If any fact or circumstance could be found which was calculated to hold him up to ridicule, it was eagerly laid hold of, but there was no fiercer feeling.

A report was spread during the days that immediately followed the Duke's departure that orders had been given to the officers in the upper fortress to turn their cannon on the city at the first sign of rising. Such reports were very acceptable to those who for political purposes would fain have seen somewhat of stronger feeling against the Duke. I have good reason to believe that such orders *had* been given. But I have still stronger reasons for doubting that they were ever given by the Grand Duke. And I am surest of all, that let them have been given by whom they may, there was not the smallest chance of their being obeyed. As for the Duke himself, I am very sure that he would have given or even done much to prevent any such catastrophe.

But perhaps the most remarkable and most singular scene of all that rose-water revolution was the Duke's departure from his capital and his duchy. Other sovereigns in similar plight have hidden themselves, travestied themselves, had hairbreadth escapes, or have not escaped at all. In Tuscany the fallen ruler went forth in his own carriage with one other following it, both rather heavily laden with luggage. The San Gallo gate is that by which the

hearse that conveys the day's dead to the cemetery on the slope of the Apennine leaves the city every night. And the Duke passed amid the large crowd assembled at the gate to see him go, as peaceably as the vehicle conveying those whose days in Florence, like his, were at an end, went out a few hours later by the same road.

CHAPTER XIII.

AMONG the very great number of men and women whom I have known during my life in Italy—some merely acquaintances, and many whom I knew to be, and a few, alas! a very few, whom I still know to be trusty friends—there were many of whom the world has heard, and some perhaps of whom it would not unwillingly hear something more. But time and space are limited, and I must select as best I may.

I have a very pleasant recollection of "Garibaldi's Englishman," Colonel Peard. Peard had many more qualities and capabilities than such as are essential to a soldier of fortune. The phrase, however, is perhaps not exactly that which should be used to characterise him. He had qualities which the true soldier of fortune should not possess. His partisanship was with him in the highest degree a matter of conviction and conscientious opinion, and *nothing* would have tempted him to change his colours or draw his sword on the other side. I am not sure either, whether a larger amount of native brain power, and (in a much greater degree) a higher

quality of culture, than that of the general under whom it may be his fortune to serve, is a good part of the equipment of a soldier of fortune. And Peard's relation to Garibaldi very notably exemplified this.

He was a native of Devonshire, as was my first wife; we saw a good deal of him in Florence, and I have before me a letter written to her by him from Naples on the 28th of January, 1861, which is interesting in more respects than one. Peard was a man who *would* have all that depended on him ship-shape. And this fact, taken in conjunction with the surroundings amid which he had to do his work, is abundantly sufficient to justify the growl he indulges in.

"My dear Mrs. Trollope," he writes, "I am ashamed to think either of you or of other friends at Florence; it is such an age since I have written to any of you. But I have been daily, from morning to night, hard at work for weeks. The *honour* of having a command is all very well, but the trouble and worry are unspeakable. Besides, I had such a set under me that it was enough to rile the sweetest tempered man. Volunteers may be very well in their way. I doubt not their efficiency in repelling an attack in their own country. But defend me from ever again commanding a brigade of English volunteers in a foreign country. As to the officers, many were most mutinous, and some something worse. Thank goodness the brigade is at an end.

All I now wait for is the settlement of the accounts. If I can get away by the second week in February, I at present think of taking a run as far as Cairo, then crossing to Jerusalem, and back by Jaffa, Beyrout, Smyrna, and Athens to Italy, when I shall hope once more to see you and yours.

"Politics do not look well in Southern Italy, I fear. The Mazzinists have been most active, and have got up a rather strong feeling against Cavour and what they think the peace party. Now Italy must have a little rest for organisation, civil as well as military. They do not give the Government time to do or even propose good measures for the improvement of the country. No sooner are one set of ministers installed than intrigues are on foot to upset them. I firmly believe that the only hope for Southern Italy and Sicily is in a strong military Government. These districts must be treated as *conquered provinces*, and the people educated and taught habits of industry, whether they like it or not. The country is at present in a state of barbarism, and must be saved from that. All that those who are *supposed to be educated* seem to think about is how they can get a few dollars out of Government." [I fear the honest Englishman would find that those supposed to be educated in those provinces are as much in a state of barbarism in the matters that offended him as ever.] "I never saw such a set of harpies in my life. One had the assurance to come to me a few days since, asking if I could not take him on the strength of the brigade, so as to enable

him to get six months pay out of the Government. As to peculation, read *Gil Blas*, and that will give you a faint sketch of the customs and habits of all *impiegati* [civil servants] in this part of Italy. I do not believe that the Southern Italians, taken as a body, know what honesty is." [All that he says is true to the present day. But the distinction which he makes between the Southern Italians and those of the other provinces is most just, and must be remembered.] "But that is the fault of the horrid system of tyranny under which they have so long lived. I do not say that the old system must be reformed, it must be totally changed. Solomon might make laws, but so corrupt are all the *impiegati*, that I doubt if he could get them carried out. Poor Garibaldi is made a tool of by a set of designing intriguers, who will sacrifice him at any moment. He is too honest to see or believe of dishonesty in others. He has no judgment of character. He has been surrounded by a set of blacklegs and swindlers, many among them, I regret to say, English. How I look forward to seeing you all again! Till we meet, believe me

"Most truly yours,

"GIO. [*sic*] PEARD."

The last portion of this letter is highly interesting and historically well worth preserving. It is entirely and accurately true. And there was no man in existence more fitted by native integrity and hatred of dishonesty on the one hand, and close intimacy

with the subject of his remarks on the other, to speak authoritatively on the matter than "Garibaldi's Englishman."

The following letter, written, as will be seen, on the eve of his departure for the celebrated expedition to Sicily, is also interesting. It is dated Genoa.

"DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE,—I have been thinking over your observations about *terno*. I don't give up my translation; but would it not be literal enough to translate it, 'the bravest three colours'?

[This refers to the rendering of the lottery phrase *terno* in a translation by my wife of the *stornello* of Dall' Ongaro previously mentioned. In the Italian lottery, ninety numbers, 1—90, are always put into the wheel. Five only of these are drawn out. The player bets that a number named by him shall be one of these (*semplice estratto*); or that it shall be the first drawn (*estratto determinato*); or that two numbers named by him shall be two of the five drawn (*ambo*); or that three so named shall be drawn (*terno*). It will be seen, therefore, that the winner of an *estratto determinato*, ought, if the play were quite even, to receive ninety times his stake. But, in fact, such a player would receive only seventy-five times his stake, the profit of the Government consisting of this pull of fifteen per ninety against the player. Of course, what he ought to receive

in any of the other cases is easily (not by me, but by experts) calculable. It will be admitted that the difficulty of translating the phrase in Dall' Ongaro's little poem, so as to be intelligible to English readers, was considerable. The letter then proceeds]:

"I did not start, you will see, direct from Livorno [Leghorn], for Medici wrote me to join him here. Moreover, the steamer by which I expected to have gone, did not make the trip, but was sent back to this city. I will worry you with a letter when anything stirring occurs. We sail to-night. Part went off last evening—1,500. We go in three steamers, and shall overtake the others.

"With kind regards to all friends, believe me,

"Yours very faithfully,

"JOHN PEARD."

The remarks contained in the former of the two letters here transcribed seem to make this a proper place for recording "what I remember" of Garibaldi.

My first acquaintance with him was through my very old, and very highly valued, loved, and esteemed friend, Jessie White Mario. The Garibaldi *culte* has been with her truly and literally the object (apart from her devoted love for her husband, an equally ardent worshipper at the same shrine) for which she has lived, and for which she has again and again affronted death. For she

accompanied him in all his Italian campaigns as a hospital nurse, and on many occasions rendered her inestimable services in that capacity under fire. If Peard has been called "Garibaldi's Englishman," truly Jessie White Mario deserves yet more emphatically the title of "Garibaldi's Englishwoman." She has published a large life of Garibaldi, which is far and away the best and most trustworthy account of the man and his wonderful works. She is not blind to the spots on the sun of her adoration, nor does she seek to conceal the fact that there were such spots, but she is a true and loyal worshipper all the same.

Her husband was—alas! that I should write so; for no Indian wife's life was ever more ended by her suttee than Jessie Mario's life has practically been ended by her husband's untimely death!—Alberto Mario was among the, I fear, few exceptions to Peard's remarks on the men who were around Garibaldi. He was not only a man of large literary culture, a brave soldier, an acute politician, a formidable political adversary, and a man of perfect and incorruptible integrity, but he would have been considered in any country and in any society in Europe a very perfect gentleman. He was in political opinion a consistent and fearlessly outspoken Republican. He and I therefore differed *toto cœlo*. But our differences never diminished our, I trust, mutual esteem, nor our friendly intercourse. But he was

a born *frondeur*. He edited during his latter years a newspaper at Rome, which was a thorn in the side of the authorities. I remember his being prosecuted and condemned for persistently speaking of the Pope in his paper as "Signor Pecci." He was sentenced to imprisonment. But all the Government wanted was his condemnation; and he was never incarcerated. But he used to go daily to the prison and demand the execution of his sentence. The gaoler used to shut the door in his face, and he narrated the result of his visit in the next day's paper!

It was as Jessie Mario's friend then, that I first knew Garibaldi.

One morning at the villa I then possessed, at Ricorboli, close to Florence, a maid-servant came flying into the room, where I was still in bed at six o'clock in the morning, crying out in the utmost excitement, "*C'è il Generale! c'è il Generale; e chiede di lei, signore!*"—"Here's the General! here's the General! And he is asking for you, sir!" She spoke as if there was but one general in all the world. But there was hardly any room in Florence at that time where her words would not have been understood as well as I understood them.

I jumped out of bed, got into a dressing-gown, and ran out to where the "General" was on the lawn before the door, just as I was, and hardly more than half awake. There he was, all alone. But if there had been a dozen other men around

him, I should have had no difficulty in recognising him. There was the figure as well known to every Italian from Turin to Syracuse as that of his own father—the light grey trousers, the little foraging cap, the red shirt, the bandana handkerchief loosely thrown over his shoulders and round his neck.

Prints, photographs, portraits of all kinds, have made the English public scarcely less familiar than the Italian, with the physiognomy of Giuseppe Garibaldi. But no photograph, of course, and no painting which I have ever seen, gives certain peculiarities of that striking head and face, as I first saw it, somewhere about twenty years ago.

The pose of the head, and the general arrangement and colour of the tawny hair (at that time but slightly grizzled) justified the epithet "leonine" so often applied to him. His beard and moustache were of the same hue, and his skin was probably fair by nature, but it had been tanned by wind and weather. The clear blue eyes were surrounded by a network of fine lines. This had no trace or suggestion of *cunning*, as is often the case with wrinkles round the setting of the eyes, but was obviously the result of habitual contraction of the muscles in gazing at very distant objects. In short, Garibaldi's eyes, both in this respect and in respect of a certain, steadfast, far-away look in them, were the eyes of a sailor. Seamanship, as is generally known, was his first profession. Another physical peculiarity of his which I do

not remember to have seen noticed in print was a remarkably beautiful voice. It was fine in quality and of great range; sweet, yet manly, and with a suggestion of stored-up power which harmonised with the man. It seemed to belong, too, to the benevolence, which was the habitual expression of his face when in repose.

"Jessie [pronounced Jèssee] told me I should find you up; but you are not so early as I am!" was his salutation. I said he had *dans le temps* been beforehand with others as well as with me! At which he laughed, not, I thought, ill-pleased. And then we talked—about Italy of course. One subject of his talk I specially remember, because it gave rise to a little discussion, and in a great degree gave me the measure of the man.

"As for the priests," said he, "they ought all to be put to death, without exception and without delay!"

"Rather a strong measure!" I ventured to say.

"Not a bit too strong! not a bit!" he rejoined warmly. "Do we not put assassins to death? And is not the man who murders your soul worse than the man who only kills your body?"

I attempted to say that the difference of the two cases lay in the fact, that as to the killing of the body there was no doubt about the matter, whereas mankind differed very widely as to the killing of the soul; and that as long as it remained a moot point whether priests did so or not, it would hardly be

practicable or even politic to adopt the measure he suggested.

But he would not listen to me—only repeated with increasing excitement that no good could come to humanity till all priests were destroyed.

Then we talked about the Marios, of both of whom he spoke with the greatest affection; and of the prospects of "going to Rome," which of course he considered the simplest and easiest thing possible.

I saw Garibaldi on many subsequent occasions, but never again *tête-à-tête*, or *a quattro occhi*, as the Italians more significantly phrase it. The last time I ever saw him was under melancholy circumstances enough, though the occasion professed to be one of rejoicing. It was at the great gathering at Palermo for celebrating the anniversary of the Sicilian Vespers. Of course such a celebration would have brought Garibaldi to partake in it, wherever he might have been, short of in his grave. And truly he was then very near that. It was a melancholy business. He was brought from the steamer to his bed in the hotel on a litter through the streets lined by the thousands who had gathered to see him, but who had been warned that his condition was such, that the excitement occasioned by any shouting would be perilous to him. Amid dead silence his litter passed through the crowds who were longing to welcome him to the scene of his old triumphs! Truly it was more like a funeral procession than one of rejoicing.

It was very shortly before his death, which many people thought had been accelerated by that last effort to make his boundless popularity available for the propagation of Radicalism.

Peard's words reveal with exactitude the deficiency which lay at the root of all the blunders, follies, and imprudences which rendered his career less largely beneficent for Italy than it might have been. "He had no judgment of character," and was too honest to believe in knavery. It must be added that he was too little intelligent to detect it, or to estimate the consequences of it. Of any large views of social life, or of the means by which, and the objects for which, men should be governed, he was as innocent as a baby. In a word, he was not an intellectual man. All the high qualities which placed him on the pinnacle he occupied were qualities of the heart and not of the head. They availed with admirable success to fit him for exercising a supreme influence over men, especially young men, in the field, and for all the duties of a guerilla leader. They would not have sufficed to make him a great commander of armies; and did still less fit him for becoming a political leader.

Whom next shall I present to the reader from the portrait gallery of my reminiscences?

Come forward, Franz Pulszky, most genial, most large-hearted of philosophers and friends!—I can't say "guides," for though he was both the first, he was not the last, differing widely as we did upon—perhaps not most, but at all events—many large subjects.

I had known the lady whom Pulszky married in Vienna many years previously, and long before he knew her. She was the daughter of that highly cultivated Jewish family of whom I have spoken before. When I first knew her she was as pretty and charming a young girl as could be imagined. She was possessed then of all the accomplishments that can adorn a girl at that period of life. Later on she showed that she was gifted with sense, knowledge, energy, firmness, courage and *caractère* in a degree very uncommon. Since leaving Vienna I had neither seen nor heard more of her, till she came to live with her husband and family of children in Florence. But our old acquaintanceship was readily and naturally renewed, and his villa near the city became one of the houses I best loved to frequent. She had at that time, and even well-nigh I take it in those old days at Vienna, abandoned all seeming of conformity to the practices of the faith she was born in.

I used to say of Pulszky that he was like a barrel full to the bung with generous liquor, which flowed in a full stream, stick the spigot in where you would. He was—is, I am happy to say is the proper tense in his case—a most many-sided man. His talk on artistic subjects, mainly historical and biographical, was abundant and most amusing. His antiquarian knowledge was large. His ethnographical learning, theories, and speculations were always interesting and often most suggestive. Years had, I think, put some water in the wine of his political ideas, but not

enough to prevent differences between us on such subjects. He was withal—there again I mean "is," for I am sure that years and the air of his beloved Pesth cannot have put any water in *that* generous and genial wine—a fellow of infinite jest, and full of humour; in a word, one of the fullest and most delightful companions I have ever known. He talked English with no further accent than served to add a raciness to the flavour of his conversation; and every morning of one fixed day in the week he used to come to Ricorboli for what he called a tobacco parliament.

I used frequently to spend the evening at his villa, where one met a somewhat extraordinary cosmopolitan gathering. Generally we had some good music; for Madame Pulszky was—unhappily in her case the past tense is needed—a very perfect musician. Among other people more or less off the world's beaten track, I used to meet there a very extraordinary Russian, who had accomplished the rare feat of escaping from Siberia. He was a Nihilist of the most uncompromising type; a huge, shaggy man, with an unkempt head and chest like those of a bear; and by his side—more or less—there was a pretty, *petite*, dainty little young wife—beauty and the beast, if ever that storied couple were seen in the flesh!

Many years afterwards when I and my wife saw Pulszky at Pesth, and were talking of old times, he reminded me of this person; and on my doubting that any man in his senses could believe in the

practicability of the extreme Nihilist theories, he instanced our old acquaintance, saying, "Yes, there is a man, who in his very inmost conscience believes that no good of any sort can be achieved for humanity till the sponge shall have been passed over *all* that men have instituted and done, and a perfect *tabula rasa* has been substituted for it!"

I have many letters from Pulszky, written most of them after his return to Pesth, and for the most part too much occupied with the persons and politics of that recent day to be fit for publication.

Here is one, written before he left Florence, which may be given:

"VILLA PETROVICH.

"MY DEAR TROLLOPE,—I am just returned from a long excursion with Boxall to Arezzo, Cortona, Borgo San Sepolcro, Città di Castello, Perugia, and Assisi. We were there for a week, and enjoyed it amazingly. I am sorry to say that I am not now able to join your party to Camaldoli, since I must see Garibaldi, and do not know as yet what I shall do when the war begins, which might happen during your excursion. I hope you will drink a glass of water to my remembrance at La Vernia from the miraculous well, called from the rocks by my patron saint, St. Francis of Assisi. I shall come to you on Sunday, and will tell you more about him. I studied him at Assisi.

"Yours sincerely,

"FR. PULSZKY."

The following passages may be given from a long letter, written from Pesth on the 27th of March, 1869. It is for the most part filled with remarks on the party politics of the hour, and persons, many of them still on the scene :—

"My dear Mrs. and Mr. Trollope,—You don't believe how glad I was to get a token of remembrance from you. It seems to me quite an age since I left Florence, and your letter was like a voice from a past period. I live here as a stranger; you would not recognise me. I talk nothing but politics and business. There is not a man with whom I could speak in the way that we did on Sundays at your villa. I am of course much with old Deak. I often dine with him. I know all his anecdotes and jokes by heart. He likes it, if I visit him; but our conversation remains within the narrow limits of party politics and the topics of the day. Sometimes I spend an evening with Baron Eotvös, the Minister of Public Instruction, my old friend; and there only we get both warm in remembering the days of our youth, and building *châteaux en Espagne* for the future of the country. Eotvös has appointed me Director of the National Museum, which contains a library of 180,000 volumes, mostly Hungarian; a very indifferent picture gallery, with a few good pictures and plenty of rubbish; a poor collection of antiquities; splendid mediæval goldsmith work; arms, coins, and some miserable statues; a good collection of stuffed birds; an

excellent one of butterflies; a celebrated one of beetles, and good specimens for geology and mineralogy. But all this collection is badly, if at all, catalogued; badly arranged; and until now we have in a great palace an appropriation of only 1,200*l.* a year. I shall have much to do there—as much as any minister in his office, if politics leave me the necessary time for it.

[Then follows a quantity of details about the party politics of the day. And then he continues:—]

"Such a contested election with us costs about 2,000*l.* to 3,000*l.* I must say I never spent money with more regret than this; but I had to maintain the party interest and my family influence in my electoral district. I have there a fine old castle and a splendid park, but I rarely go to the country, since I have jumped, as you know, once more into the whirlpool of politics, and can't get out again. An agrarian communistic agitation has been initiated, I do not know whether with or without the sanction of S——, but certainly it has spread rapidly over a great portion of the country, and I doubt whether Government has the energy for putting that agitation down. It is a very serious question, especially as it finds us engaged in many other questions of the highest interest.

[Then he gives an outline of the position of Hungary in relation to other States, and then he continues:—]

"We remain still in opposition with the Wallachians, or, as they now like to call them-

selves, Rumanes, and we try to maintain the peace with Prussia. And now when we should concentrate all our forces to meet the changes which threaten us, a stupid and wicked Opposition divides the nation into two hostile camps [how very singular and unexampled!]. We fight one another to the great pleasure of Russia and Prussia, who enjoy our fratricidal feuds as the Romans in the amphitheatre enjoyed the fights of the barbarians in the arena.

"I must beg your pardon, dear Mrs. Trollope, that I grow so pathetic! You know it is not my custom when I am with ladies. But you must know likewise that I live now outside of female society. I do not exactly know whether it is my fault or that of the ladies of Pesth; so much is certain that only at Vienna, where I go from time to time, I call upon ladies. As to my children, Augustus, whom you scarcely know, is a volunteer in the army according to our law of universal conscription. Charles you may have seen at Florence. I sent him thither to visit his grandmother." [Madame Walter, the mother of Madame Pulszky; the lady who had received us with such pleasant hospitality at Vienna, and who had come to reside at Florence, where she lived to a great age much liked and respected.] "Polixena gets handsome and clever; little Garibaldi is to go to school in September next. I grow old, discontented, insupportable;" [we found him at Pesth many years afterwards no one of the three!]; "a journey to

Greece and Italy would certainly do me immense good; but I fear I must give up that plan for the present year, since after a contested election it is a serious thing to spend money for amusement. In June I shall leave my present lodging and go to the Museum, which stands in a handsome square opposite to the House of Parliament. Excuse me for my long, long talk; and do not forget your faithful friend, *in partibus infidelium*,

"FR. PULSZKY."

On the 26th of March, 1870, he writes a letter which was brought to us by his son, the Augustus mentioned in the letter I have just transcribed.

"MY DEAR MRS. AND MR. TROLLOPE,—Detained by Parliamentary duties and the management of my own affairs, I am still unable to make a trip to Italy to visit my friends, who made the time of my exile more agreeable to me than my own country. But I send in my stead a second edition of the old Pulszky, revised and corrected *ad usum Delphini*, though I do not doubt that you prefer the old book, to which you were accustomed. My son Augustus has now finished his studies, and is D.E.L.—in a few days Lieutenant in the reserve, and Secretary at the Ministry of Finance. Few young men begin their career in a more promising way. As to myself, Augustus will tell you more than I could write. I have remained too long in foreign countries to feel entirely at home at Pesth, where people know how to make use of everybody. I am M.P.,

belong to the Finance Committee, am Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Affairs in the Delegation, Director of the Museum, Chairman of the Philological Section in the Academy of Sciences, Chairman of the Society of Fine Arts, Vice-President of three Insurance Offices, and Member of the Council of two railroads. This long list proves sufficiently that my time is taken up from early morning to night. But my health is good, despite of the continuous wear and tear.

"During the summer vacations I wish to go to England. For ten years I have not been there; and I long to see again a highly civilised people; else I become myself a barbarian. Still I am proud of my Hungarians, who really struggle hard, and not without success, to be more than they are now—the first of the barbarians.

"I have for a long time not heard of you. Of course, in our correspondence your letter was the last, not mine. It is my own fault. But you must excuse me still for one year. Then I hope I can put myself in a more comfortable position. For the present I am unable even to read anything but Hungarian papers, bills, reports, and business letters. I envy you in your elegant villa, where you enjoy life! I hope you are both well, and do not forget your old friend,

"FR. PULSZKY.

"P.S.—Augustus will give you a good photograph of me."

Here is one other letter of the 13th June, 1872 :—

"My dear Trollope,—What a pity that my time does not allow me to visit Italy at any other season than just in summer. We are in the midst of our canvass for the general elections. My son Augustus is to be returned for my old place Szecseny without opposition on the 21st. On the following day we go to the poll at Gyöngyös, a borough which is to send me to Parliament. It is a contested election, therefore rather troublesome and expensive, though not too expensive. Parliament meets with us on the first of September. Thus my holidays are in July and August. Shall we never have the pleasure to see you and Mrs. Trollope, to whom I beg you to give my best regards, here at Pesth? Next year is the great exhibition at Vienna. Might it not induce you to visit Vienna, whence by an afternoon trip you come to Pesth, where I know you would amuse yourselves to your hearts' content.

"My children are quite well. Charles is at the University at Vienna. He despises politics, and wants to become Professor at the University of Pesth in ten or twelve years.

"As to me I am well, very busy; much attacked by the Opposition since I am a dreaded party man. Besides I have to re-organise the National Museum, from the library, which has no catalogue, to the great collections of mineralogy and plants. We bought the splendid picture gallery of Prince

Esterhazy. This too is under my direction, with a most important collection of prints and drawings. You see, therefore, that my time is fully occupied.

"Yours always,

"FR. PULSZKY."

My wife and I did subsequently visit our old friend at Pesth, and much enjoyed our brief stay there and our chat of old times. But the work of re-organising the Museum was not yet completed. I do sincerely hope that the task has been brought to an end by this time, and that I may either in England or at Pesth once again see Franz Pulszky in the flesh!

CHAPTER XIV.

According to the pathetic, and on the face of it accurately truthful, account of the close of his life in Mr. Forster's admirable and most graphic life of him, I never knew Landor. For the more than octogenarian old man whom I knew at Florence was clearly not the Landor whom England had known and admired for so many and such honoured years. Of all the painful story of the regrettable circumstances which caused him to seek his last home in Florence it would be mere impertinence in me to speak, after the lucid, and at the same time delicately-touched, account of them which his biographer has given.

I may say, however, that even after the many years of his absence from Florence there still lingered a traditional remembrance of him—a sort of Landor legend—which made all us Anglo-Florentines of those days very sure, that however blamable his conduct (with reference to the very partially understood story of the circumstances that caused him to leave England) may have been in the eyes of lawyers or of moralists, the motives and feelings

that had actuated him must have been generous and chivalrous. Had we been told that, finding a brick wall in a place where he thought no wall should be, he had forthwith proceeded to batter it down with his head, though it was not his wall but another's, we should have recognised in the report the Landor of the myths that remained among us concerning him. But that while in any degree *compos mentis* he had under whatever provocation acted in a base, or cowardly, or mean, or underhand manner, was, we considered, wholly impossible.

There were various legendary stories current in Florence in those days of his doings in the olden time. Once—so said the tradition—he knocked a man down in the street, was brought before the *delegato*, as the police magistrate was called, and promptly fined one piastre, value about four and sixpence; whereupon he threw a sequin (two piastres) down upon the table and said that it was unnecessary to give him any change, inasmuch as he purposed knocking the man down again as soon as he left the court. We, *poteri*, as regarded the date of the story, were all convinced that the true verdict in the matter was that of the old Cornish jury, "Sarved un right."

Landor, as I remember him, was a handsome-looking old man, very much more so, I think, than he could have been as a young man, to judge by the portrait prefixed to Mr. Forster's volumes. He was a man of somewhat leonine aspect as regards the general appearance and expression of the head and

face, which accorded well with the large and massive build of the figure, and to which a superbly curling white beard added not only picturesqueness, but a certain nobility.

Landor had been acquainted with the Garrows, and with my first wife at Torquay; and the acquaintance was quickly renewed during his last years at Florence. He would frequently come to our house in the Piazza dell' Independenza, and chat for a while, generally after he had sat silent for some little time; for he used to appear fatigued by his walk. Later, when his walks and his visits had come to an end, I used often to visit him in "the little house under the wall of the city, directly back of the Carmine, in a bye-street called the Via Nunziatina, not far from that in which the Casa Guidi stands," which Mr. Forster thus describes. I continued these visits, always short, till very near the close; for whether merely from the perfect courtesy which was a part of his nature, or whether because such interruptions of the long morning hours were really welcome to him, he never allowed me to leave him without bidding me come again.

I remember him asking me after my mother at one of the latest of these visits. I told him that she was fairly well, was not suffering, but that she was becoming very deaf. "Dead, is she?" he cried, for he had heard me imperfectly, "I wish I was! I can't sleep," he added, "but I very soon shall, soundly too, and all the twenty-four hours round." I used often to find him reading one of the novels

of his old friend G. P. R. James, and he hardly ever failed to remark that he was a "woonderful" writer; for so he pronounced the word, which was rather a favourite one with him.

It was a singular thing that Landor always dropped his aspirates. He was, I think, the only man in his position in life whom I ever heard do so. That a man who was not only by birth a gentleman, but was by genius and culture—and such culture!—very much more, should do this, seemed to me an incomprehensible thing. I do not think he ever introduced the aspirate where it was not needed, but he habitually spoke of 'and, 'ead, and 'ouse.

Even very near the close, when he seemed past caring for anything, the old volcanic fire still lived beneath its ashes, and any word which touched even gently any of his favourite and habitual modes of thought was sure to bring forth a reply uttered with a vivacity of manner quite startling from a man who the moment before had seemed scarcely alive to what you were saying to him. To what extent this old volcanic fire still burned may be estimated from a story which was then current in Florence. The circumstances were related to me in a manner that seemed to me to render it impossible to doubt the truth of them. But I did not *see* the incident in question, and therefore cannot assert that it took place. The attendance provided for him by the kindly care of Mr. Browning, as narrated by Mr. Forster, was most assiduous and exact, as I had many opportunities of observing. But one day

when he had finished his dinner, thinking that the servant did not come to remove the things so promptly as she ought to have done, he took the four corners of the table-cloth (so goes the story), and thus enveloping everything that was on the table, threw the whole out of the window.

I received many notes from Landor, for the most part on trifling occasions, and possessing little interest. They were interesting, however, to the race of autograph collectors, and they have all been coaxed out of me at different times, save one. I have, however, in my possession several letters from him to my father-in-law, Mr. Garrow, many passages in which are so characteristic that I am sure my readers will thank me for giving them, as I am about to do. The one letter of his that remains to me is, as the reader will see, not altogether without value as a trait of character. The young lady spoken of in it is the same from whose papers in the *Atlantic Monthly*, entitled "Last Days of Walter Savage Landor," Mr. Forster has gleaned, as he says, one or two additional glimpses of him in his last Florence home. The letter is without date, and runs as follows :—

"My dear Sir,—Let me confess to you that I am not very willing that it should be believed desirous" [he evidently meant to write either 'that I should be believed desirous,' or 'that it should be believed that I am desirous'] "of scattering my image indiscriminately over the land. On this sentiment I

forbade Mr. Forster to prefix an engraving of me over my collected works. If Miss Field wishes *one* more photograph, Mr. Alinari may send it to her, and I enclose the money to pay for it. With every good wish for your glory and prosperity,

"I remain, my dear sir,

"Very truly yours,

"W. S. LANDOR."

The writing is that of a sadly shaking hand. The lady's request would unquestionably have been more sure of a favourable response had she preferred it in person, instead of doing so through me. But I suspect from the phrase "one more," and the underlining of the word one, that she had already received from him more than one photograph, and was ashamed to make yet another application. But she had led, or allowed, me to imagine that she was then asking for the first time. The care to send the money for the price of the photograph was a characteristic touch. Miss Field was, I well remember, a great favourite with Landor. I remember her telling me that he wished to give her a very large sort of scrap book, in which, among a quantity of things of no value, there were, as I knew, some really valuable drawings; and asking me whether she should accept it, her own feeling leaning to the opinion that she ought not to do so, in which view I strongly concurred. If I remember right the book had been sent to her residence, and had to be sent back again, not without danger of seriously angering him.

Here are the letters I have spoken of, written by Landor to Mr. Garrow. They are all undated save by the day of the month, but the post-marks show them to have been all written in 1836-8. The first is a very long letter, almost the whole of which is about a quarrel between husband and wife, both friends of the writer, which it would serve no good purpose to publish. The following passage from it, however, must not be lost :—

"What egregious blockheads must those animals have been who discover a resemblance to my style in Latin or other quotations. I have no need of crutches. I can walk forward without anybody's arm ; and if I wanted one, I should not take an old one in preference. Not only do I think that quotations are deformities and impediments, but I am apt to believe that my own opinion, at least in those matters of which I venture to treat, is quite as good as any other man's, living or dead. If their style is better than my own, it would be bad policy to insert it ; if worse, I should be like a tailor who would recommend his abilities by engrafting an old sleeve on a new coat. . . . Southey tells me that he has known his lady more than twenty years, that the disproportion of their ages is rational, and that having only one daughter left, his necessary absences would be irksome to her. Whatever he does, is done wisely and virtuously. As for Rogers, almost an octogenarian, be it on his own head! A dry nettle tied to a rose-bud, just enough life in it to

sting, and that's all. Lady Blessington would be delighted at any fresh contribution from Miss Garrow. Let it be sent to her at Gore House. I go there to-morrow for ten days, then into Warwickshire, then to Southampton. But I have not given up all hope of another jaunt to Torquay. Best compliments to the ladies.

"Yours ever,

"W. S. L."

The following is dated the 15th of November, 1837—just half a century ago!

"35, ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, BATH.

"I should be very ungrateful if I did not often think of you. But among my negligences, I must regret that I did not carry away with me the address of our friend Bezzi." [A Piedmontese refugee who was a very intimate friend of Garrow's. I knew him in long subsequent years, when political changes had made it possible for him to return to Italy. He was a very clever and singularly brilliant man, whose name, I think, became known to the English public in connection with the discovery of the celebrated portrait of Dante on a long white-washed wall of the Bargello, in Florence. There was some little jealousy about the discovery between him and Kirkup. The truth was that Kirkup's large and curious antiquarian knowledge led him to feel sure that the picture must be there, under

the whitewash; while Bezzi's influence with the authorities succeeded in getting the wall cleared of its covering.] "I am anxious to hear how he endures his absence from Torquay, and I will write to him the moment I hear of him. Tell Miss Garrow that the muses like the rustle of dry leaves almost as well as the whispers of green ones. If she doubts it, entreat her on my part to ask the question of them. Nothing in Bath is vastly interesting to me now. Two or three persons have come up and spoken to me whom I have not seen for a quarter of a century. Of these faces I recollect but one, and it was the ugliest! By the same token—but here the figure of aposiopesis is advantageous to me—old Madam Burridge, of my lodgings, has sent me three large forks and one small, which I left behind. She forgot to send another of each. What is worse, I left behind me a three-faced seal, which I think I once showed you. It was enclosed in a black rough case. This being of the time of Henry the Eighth, and containing the arms of my family connections, I value far above a few forks, or a few dozens. It cannot be worth sixpence to whoever has it. One of the engravings was a greyhound with an arrow through him, a crest of my grandmother's, whose maiden name was Noble. If you pass by, pray ask about it—not that I am ever disappointed at the worst result of an inquiry. I am afraid the ladies of your house will think me imprudent; and what must be their opinion, if you let it transpire that I have furthermore invested a

part of my scrip in the beaver trade. Offer my best regards to them all, and believe me,

"My dear sir,

"Yours very sincerely,

"W. S. L."

The following is dated only January 2nd, but the post-mark shows it to have been written from Bath on that day, 1838.

"My dear Sir,—Yesterday there were lying across my fender three or four sheets of paper, quite in readiness to dry themselves, and receive my commands. One of these, I do assure you, was destined for Torquay, but the interruption of visitors would allow me time only to cover half a one with my scrawl. Early last week I wrote a long letter to Bezzi, but wanted the courage to send it. I wish him to remain in England as much almost as you yourself can do. But if after promising his lady" [it is noteworthy that such a master of English as Landor, should use, now for the second time in these letters, this ugly phrase] "to let her try the air of Italy, he should withdraw, she might render his life less comfortable by reproaches not altogether unmerited. When she gets there she will miss her friends; she will hear nothing but a language which is unknown to her, and will find that no change of climate can remove her ailments. I offered my house to Bezzi some time ago, with its two gardens and a hundred acres of land, all for

a hundred a year. But I am confident my son will never remain in England, and after the expiration of the year will return to Tuscany. Bezzi cannot find another house, even without garden, for that money. James paid for a worse twelve louis a month, although he took it for eight months. So the houses in Tuscany are very far from inviting to an economist, although vastly less expensive than at Torquay, the rival of Naples in this respect as in beauty. . . . I have found my seal in a waist-coat pocket. I do not think the old woman stole the forks, but she knew they were stolen. . . . Kenyon has something of Falstaff about him, both in the physical and the moral. But he is a friendly man, of rare judgment in literary works, and of talents that only fall a little short of genius.

"God preserve you from your Belial Bishop!" [Philpotts]. "What an incumbent! I would not see the rascal once a month to be as great a man as Mr. Shedden, or as sublime a genius as Mr. Wise," [word under the seal] "would drown me in bile or poison me with blue pills. A society has been formed here, of which the members have come to the resolution of making inquiries at every house about the religion of the inmates, what places of worship they attend, &c., &c. Is not it hard upon a man, who has changed a couple of sovereigns into half-crowns for Christmas boxes, to be forced to spend ten shillings for a horsewhip, when he no longer has a horse? Our weather here is quite as mild and beautiful as it can possibly be at

Torquay. Miss Garrow, I trust, has listened to the challenges of the birds, and sung a new song. As Bezzi is secretary and librarian, I must apply to him for it, unless she will condescend to trust me with a copy. I will now give you a specimen of my iron seal, brass setting and pewter mending.

"Yours ever,

"W. S. L."

The mention of Bishop Philpotts (though not by name) in the foregoing letter, reminds me of a story which used to be told of him, and which is too good to be lost, even though thus parenthetically told. When at Torquay he used to frequent a small church, in which the service was at that time performed by a very young curate of the extra gentle butter-won't-melt-in-his-mouth kind, who had much objection to the phrase in the Communion service, "eateth and drinketh his own damnation," and ventured somewhat tremblingly to substitute "condemnation" for the word which offended him. Whereupon the orthodox Bishop reared his head, as he knelt with the rest of the congregation and roared aloud "*Damnation!*" Whether the curate had to be carried out fainting, I don't remember.

The next letter of Landor's that I have is dated 13th April, St. James's Square, Bath. The postmark shows that it was written in 1838.

"My dear Sir,—I have had Kenyon here these last four days. He tells me that he saw Bezzi in London, and that we may entertain some hopes that

he will be induced to remain in England. All he wants is some employment; and surely his powerful friends among the Whigs could easily procure him it. But the Whigs of all scoundrelly factions, are, and have ever been, the most scoundrelly, the most ungenerous, the most ungrateful. What have they done for Fonblanque, who could have kicked them overboard on his toe-nail? Their abilities put together are less than a millionth of his; and his have been constantly and most zealously exerted in their favour. My first conversation with Kenyon was about the publication of his poems, which are just come out. They are in part extremely clever; particularly one on happiness and another on the shrine of the Virgin. He was obliged to print them at his own expense; and his cousin, Miss Barrett, who also has written a few poems of no small merit, could not find a publisher. These, however, bear no proportion to Miss Garrow's.[1] Yet I doubt whether publishers and the folks they consult would find out that.

"Southey was about to write to me when his brother's death, by which six children come under

[1] To those who never knew Landor, and the habitual limitless exaggeration of his manner of speaking, it may be necessary to observe that he did not really hold any opinion so monstrous as might be supposed from the passage in the text. And a letter given by Mr. Forster expresses earnestly and vigorously enough his high admiration for Miss Barrett's poetry. It must be remembered also, that at the time this was written, Mr. Landor could only have seen some of the earliest of Miss Barrett's writings.

his care, interrupted him. I wish I possessed one or two of Miss Garrow's beautiful poems, that I might ask his opinion and advice about them. His opinion I know would be the same as mine; but his advice is what I want. Surely it cannot be requisite and advantageous to withhold them from the world so long as you imagine. In one single year both enough of materials and of variety for a volume might be collected and prepared. Would Miss Garrow let me offer one to the *Book of Beauty?* I shall be with Lady Blessington the last day of the present month. One of the best poems of our days" [on death], "appeared in the last *Book of Beauty.* But in general its poetry is very indifferent. With best regards to the ladies,

"I am ever, my dear sir,

"Yours most sincerely,

"W. S. L."

The following, dated merely "Gore House, Sunday morning," was written, or at least posted, on the 14th May, 1838.

"MY DEAR SIR,—It is impossible you should not often have thought me negligent and ungrateful. Over and over again have I redd [*sic*], the incomparably fine poetry you sent me; and intended that Lady Blessington should partake in the high enjoyment it afforded me. I had promised her to be at Gore House toward the end of April, but I had not the courage to face all my friends. However, here

I came on Friday evening; and before I went to bed I redd to her ladyship what I promised her. She was enchanted. I then requested her to toss aside some stuff of mine, and to make way for it in the next *Book of Beauty*. The gods, as Homer says, granted half my prayer, and it happened to be (what was not always the case formerly) the better half. She will insert both. It is only by some such means as that that the best poetry in our days comes with mincing step into popularity. Mine being booted and spurred, both ladies and gentlemen get out of the way of it, and look down at it with a touch of horror.

"Now for news, and about your neighbours. Captain Ackland is going to marry a niece of Massy Dawson. Mischievous things are said about poor Lady M——, all false, you may be sure. Admiral Aylmer after all his services under Nelson, &c., &c., is unable to procure a commission in the marines for his nephew, Frederick Paynter. Lord A. will not ask. I am a suitor to all the old women I know, and shall fail too, for it is not the thing they want me to ask of them.

"I see two new Deputy Lord-Lieutenants have been appointed for the County of Monmouth. My estate there is larger than the Lord Lieutenant's; yet even this mark of respect has not been paid me. It might be, safely. I shall consider myself sold to the devil, and for more than my value, when I accept any distinction, or anything else from any man living. The Whigs are growing unpopular, I hear.

I hope never to meet any of them. Last night, however, I talked a little with Grantley Berkeley, and told him a bit of my mind. You see, I have not much more room in my paper, else I should be obliged to tell you that the bells are ringing, and that I have only just time to put on my gloves for church.

"Adieu, and believe me with kindly regards to the ladies,

"Yours,

"W. S. L."

The last in this series of letters which has reached my hands is altogether undated, but appears by the post-mark to have been written from Bath, 19th July, 1838.

"My dear Sir,—There is one sentence in your letter which shocked me not a little. You say 'The Whigs have not offered you a Deputy Lieutenantcy; so cheap a distinction could not have hurt them. But then you are too proud to ask,' &c. Do you really suppose that I would have accepted it even if it had been offered? No, by God! I would not accept any distinction even if it were offered by honest men. I will have nothing but what I can take. It is, however, both an injustice and an affront to confer this dignity on low people, who do not possess a fourth of my property, and whose family is as ignoble as Lord Melbourne's own, and not to have offered the same to me. In the eleventh page of the *Letters* I published after the quelling of Bonaparte

are these words: 'I was the first to abjure the party of the Whigs, and shall be the last to abjure the principles. When the leaders had broken all their promises to the nation, had shown their utter incapacity to manage its affairs, and their inclination to crouch before the enemy, I permitted my heart after some struggles to subside and repose in the cool of this reflection—Let them escape. It is only the French nation that ever dragged such feebleness to the scaffold.' Again, page 35—'Honest men, I confess, have generally in the present times an aversion to the Whig faction, not because it is suitable either to honesty or understanding to prefer the narrow principles of the opposite party, but because in every country lax morals wish to be and are identified with public feeling, and because in our own a few of the very best have been found in an association with the very worst.' Whenever the Tories have deviated from their tenets, they have enlarged their views and exceeded their promises. The Whigs have always taken an inverse course. Whenever they have come into power, they have previously been obliged to slight those matters, and to temporise with those duties, which they had not the courage either to follow or to renounce.

"And now, my dear sir, to pleasanter matters. I have nothing in the press, and never shall have. I gave Forster all my works, written or to be written. Neither I nor my family shall have anything to do with booksellers. They say a new edition of my *Imaginary Conversations* is called for.

I have sent Forster a dozen or two of fresh ones, but I hope he will not hazard them before my death, and will get a hundred pounds or near it for the whole.

"If ever I attended a public dinner, I should like to have been present at that which the people gave to you. Never let them be quiet until the Church has gone to the devil, its lawful owner, and till something a little like Christianity takes its place. If parsons are to be Lords, it is but right and reasonable that the Queen should be Pope. Indeed, I have no objection to this, but I have to the other. What a singularity it is that those who profess a belief in Christ do not obey Him, while those who profess it in Mahomet or Moses or Boodh are obedient to their precepts, if not in certain points of morality, in all things else. Carlyle is a vigorous thinker, but a vile writer, worse than Bulwer. I breakfasted in company with him at Milman's. Macaulay was there, a clever clown, and Moore too, whom I had not seen till then. Between those two Scotchmen he appeared like a glow-worm between two thistles. There were several other folks, literary and half literary, Lord Northampton, &c., &c. I forgot Rogers. Milman has written the two best volumes of poetry we have seen lately; but when Miss Garrow publishes hers I am certain there will be a total eclipse of them. My friend Hare's brother, who married a sister of the impudent coxcomb, Edward Stanley, has bought a house at Torquay, and Hare tells me that unless he goes to Sicily he shall be there in winter. If so, we may meet; but

Bath is my dear delight in all seasons. I have been sitting for my picture, and have given it to Mrs. Paynter. It is admirably executed by Fisher.

"Yours ever,

"W. S. L."

These letters are all written upon the old-fashioned square sheet of letter paper, some gilt-edged, entirely written over, even to the turned-down ends, and heavily sealed.

Mr. Forster says no word about the Deputy-Lieutenantcy, and Landor's anger and disgust in connection with it. He must necessarily have known all about it, but probably in the exuberance of his material did not think it worth mentioning. But it evidently left almost as painful an impression on Landor's mind as the famous refusal of the Duke of Beaufort to appoint him a justice of the peace.

During the later portion of my life at Florence, and subsequently at Rome, Mr. G. P. Marsh and his very charming wife were among our most valued friends for many years. Marsh was an exception to the prevailing American rule, which for the most part changes their diplomatists with the change of President. He had been United States minister at Constantinople and at Turin before he came to Florence with the Italian monarchy. At Rome he was "the Dean" of the diplomatic body, and on many occasions various representative duties fell upon him as such which were especially unwelcome to him. The determination of the Great Powers to

send ambassadors to the Court of the Quirinal instead of ministers plenipotentiary, as previously, came as a great boon to Mr. Marsh. For as the United States send no ambassadors, his position as longest in office of all the diplomatic body, no longer placed him at the head of it.

Mr. Marsh was a man of very large and varied culture. A thorough classical scholar and excellent modern linguist, philology was perhaps his most favourite pursuit. He wrote various books, his best I think a very large octavo volume, entitled not very happily *Man in Nature*. The subject of it is the modifications and alterations which this planet has undergone at the hands of man. His subject leads him to consider much at large the denudation of mountains, which has caused and is causing such calamitous mischief in Italy and the south of France. He shows very convincingly and interestingly that the destruction of forests causes not only floods in winter and spring, but drought in summer and autumn. And the efforts which have recently been made in Italy to take some steps towards the reclothing of the mountain sides, have in great measure been due to his work, which has been largely circulated in an Italian translation.

The following letter which I select from many received from him, is not without interest. It is dated 30th November, 1867.

"DEAR SIR,—I return you Layard's article, which displays his usual marked ability, and has given me

much pleasure as well as instruction. I should much like to know what are his grounds for believing that 'a satisfactory settlement of this Roman question would have been speedily brought about with the concurrence of the Italian Government and the Liberal party in Rome, and with the tacit consent of the Emperor of the French, had it not been for the untoward enterprise of Garibaldi,' p. 283. I certainly have not the slightest ground for believing any such thing; nor do I understand *to whom* the settlement referred to would have been 'satisfactory.' Does Mr. Layard suppose that any conceivable arrangement would be satisfactory both to the Papacy and to Italian Liberals out of Rome? The *Government* of Italy, which changes as often as the moon, might have accepted something which would have satisfied Louis Napoleon, Antonelli, and the three hundred *nobili* of Rome, who waited at dinner, napkin on arm, on the Antiboini, to whom they gave an entertainment,—but the people?

"I send you one of Ferretti's pamphlets, which please keep. And I enclose in the package two of Tuckerman's books. If you could turn over the leaves of these and say to me in a note that they impress you favourably, and that you are not displeased with his magazine article, I will make him a happy man by sending him the note.

"Very truly yours,

"GEO. P. MARSH."

I did more than "turn over the leaves" of the

book sent, and did very truly say that they had interested me much. It is rather suggestive to reflect how utterly unintelligible to the present generation must be the term "Antiboini" in the above letter, without a word of explanation. The highly unpopular and objectionable "Papal Legion" had been in great part recruited from Antibes, and were hence nicknamed "Antiboini," and not, as readers of the present day might fairly imagine, from having been the opponents of any "boini."

The personal qualities of Mr. Marsh had obtained for him a great, and I may indeed say, exceptional degree of consideration and regard from his colleagues of the diplomatic body, and from the Italian ministers and political world generally. And I remember one notable instance of the manifestation of this, which I cannot refrain from citing. Mr. Marsh had written home to his Government some rather trenchantly unfavourable remarks on some portion of the then recent measures of the Italian Ministry. And by some awkward accident or mistake these had found their way into the columns of an American newspaper. The circumstances might have given rise to very disagreeable and mischievous complications and results. But the matter was suffered to pass without any official observation solely from the high personal consideration in which Mr. Marsh was held, not only at the Consulta (the Roman Foreign Office), but at the Quirinal, and in many a Roman salon.

Mr. Marsh died full of years and honours at a

ripe old age. But the closing scene of his life was remarkable from the locality of it. He had gone to pass the hot season at Vallombrosa, where a comfortable hotel replaces the old *forestieria* of the monastery, while a School of Forestry has been established by the Government within its walls. Amid those secular shades the old diplomatist and scholar breathed his last, and could not have done so in a more peaceful spot. But the very inaccessible nature of the place made it a question of some difficulty how the body should be transported in properly decorous fashion to the railway station in the valley below—a difficulty which was solved by the young scholars of the School of Forestry, who turned out in a body to have the honour of bearing on their shoulders the remains of the man whose writings had done so much to awaken the Government to the necessity of establishing the institution to which they belonged.

Mrs. Marsh, for so many years the brightest ornament of the Italo-American society, and equally admired and welcomed by the English colony, first at Florence and then at Rome, still lives for the equal delight of her friends on the other side of the Atlantic. I may not, therefore, venture to say more of "what I remember" of her, than that it abundantly accounts for the feeling of an unfilled void, which her absence occasioned and occasions in both the American and English world on the banks of the Tiber.

CHAPTER XV.

It was in the spring of the year 1860 that I first became acquainted with "George Eliot" and G. H. Lewes in Florence. But it was during their second visit to Italy in 1861 that I saw a good deal more of them. It was in that year, towards the end of May, that I succeeded in persuading them to accompany me in a visit to the two celebrated Tuscan monasteries of Camaldoli and La Vernia. I had visited both on more than one occasion previously — once with a large and very merry party of both sexes, of whom Colley Grattan was one—but the excursion made in company with G. H. Lewes and George Eliot was another-guess sort of treat, and the days devoted to it stand out in high relief in my memory as some of the most memorable in my life.

They were anxious to be moving northwards from Florence, and I had some difficulty in persuading them to undertake the expedition. A certain weight of responsibility, therefore, lay on me—that folks whose days were so sure of being turned to good profit, should not by my fault be led to waste

any of them. But I had already seen enough of both of them to feel sure that the specialties of the very exceptional little experience I proposed to them would be appreciated and acceptable. Neither he nor she were fitted by their habits, or indeed by the conditions of their health, to encounter much "roughing," and a certain amount of that was assuredly inevitable—a good deal more five-and-twenty years ago than would be the case now. But if the flesh was weak, truly the spirit was willing! I have heard grumbling and discontent from the young of either sex in the heyday of health and strength in going over the same ground. But for my companions on the present occasion, let the difficulties and discomforts be what they might, the continually varied and continually suggestive interest they found in everything around them, overrode and overbore all material considerations.

Never, I think, have I met with so impressionable and so delicately sensitive a mind as that of George Eliot! I use "sensitive" in the sense in which a photographer uses the word in speaking of his plates. Everything that passed within the ken of that wonderful organism, whether a thing or combination of things seen, or an incident, or a trait revealing or suggesting character, was instantly reproduced, fixed, registered by it, the operating light being the wonderful native force of her intellect. And the photographs so produced were by no means evanescent. If ever the admirably

epigrammatic phrase, "wax to receive and marble to retain," was applicable to any human mind, it was so to that of George Eliot. And not only were the enormous accumulations of stored-up impressions safe beyond reach of oblivion or confusion, but they were all and always miraculously ready for co-ordination with those newly coming in at each passing moment! Think of the delight of passing, in companionship with such a mind, through scenes and circumstances entirely new to it!

Lewes, too, was a most delightful companion, the cheeriest of philosophers! The old saying of "*Comes jucundus in viâ pro vehiculo est*," was especially applicable to him. Though very exhaustible in bodily force, he was inexhaustible in cheerfulness, and above all in unwearied, incessant, and minute care for "Polly." In truth, if any man could ever be said to have lived in another person, Lewes in those days, and to the end of his life, lived in and for George Eliot. The talk of worshipping the ground she trod on, and the like, are pretty lover's phrases, sometimes signifying much, and sometimes very little. But it is true accurately and literally of Lewes. That care for her, at once comprehensive and minute, unsleeping watchfulness, lest she should dash her foot against a stone, was *never* absent from his mind. She had become his real self, his genuine *ego* to all intents and purposes. And his talk and thoughts were egoistic accordingly. Of his own person, his ailments, his works, his ideas, his impressions, you might hear not a word from

him in the intercourse of many days. But there was in his inmost heart a *naïf* and never-doubting faith that talk on all these subjects as regarded *her* must be profoundly interesting to those he talked with. To me, at all events, it was so. Perhaps had it been otherwise, there would have been less of it.

We were to reach Camaldoli the first night, and had therefore to leave Florence very early in the morning. At Pelago, a little *paése*—village we should call it — on the Arno some fourteen or fifteen miles above Florence, we were to find saddle-horses, the journey we were about to make being in those days practicable in no other way, unless on foot. There was at that time a certain Antonio da Pelago, whose calling it was to act as guide, and to furnish horses. I had known him for many years, as did all those whose ramblings took them into those hills. He was in many respects what people call "a character," and seemed to fancy himself to have in some degree proprietary rights over the three celebrated Tuscan monasteries, Vallombrosa, Camaldoli, and La Vernia. He was well known to the friars at each of these establishments, and indeed to all the sparse population of that country-side. He was a very good and competent guide and courier, possessed with a very amusingly exaggerated notion of his own importance, and rather bad to turn aside from his own preconceived and predetermined methods of doing everything that had to be done. George Eliot at once made a study of him.

I am reminded, too, as I write, of the great amusement with which my old and highly-valued friend of many years, Alfred Austin, who long subsequently was making the same excursion with me and both our wives, listened to an oration of the indispensable Antonio. One of his baggage horses had strayed and become temporarily lost among the hills. He was exceedingly wroth, and poured forth his vexation in a torrent of very unparliamentary language. "*Corpo di Giuda!*" he exclaimed, among a curious assortment of heterogeneous adjurations—"Body of Judas!" stooping to the ground as he spoke, and striking the back of his hand against it, with an action that very graphically represented a singular survival of the classical *testor inferos!* Then suddenly changing his mood, he apostrophised the missing beast with the almost tearful reproach, "There! there now! Thou hast made me throw away all my devotions! All! And Easter only just gone!" That is to say, your fault has betrayed me into violence and bad language, which has begun a new record of offences just after I had made all clear by my Easter devotions.

The first stage of our rough ride was to the little hill town of Prato Vecchio on the infant Arno, and close under the lofty peaks of Falterona, in the flanks of which both the Arno and the Tiber rise. The path, as it descends to the town, winds round the ruins of an ancient castle, beneath the walls of which is still existent that Fontebranda

fountain, which Adam the forger in the *Inferno* longed for a drop of, and which almost all Dantescan scholars and critics mistake for a larger and nowadays better known fountain of the same name at Siena. On pointing it out to George Eliot, I found, of course, that the name and the whole of Adam the forger's history was familiar to her; but she had little expected to find his local habitation among these wild hills; and she was unaware of the current mistake between the Siena Fontebranda, and the little rippling streamlet before us.

The little *osteria*, at which we were to get some breakfast, was a somewhat lurid dwelling in an uninviting back lane. But the ready and smiling good-humour with which the hostess prepared her coffee and bread, and eggs and bacon, availed much to make up for deficiencies, especially for guests far more interested in observing every minute specialty of the place, the persons, and the things, than they were extreme to mark what was amiss. I remember George Eliot was especially struck by the absence of either milk or butter, and by the fact that the inhabitants of these hills, and indeed the Tuscans of the remoter parts of the country generally, never use them at all—or did not in those days.

But it was beyond Prato Vecchio that the most characteristic part of our ride began. The hills, into the folds and gullies of which we plunged almost immediately after leaving the walls of the

little town, are of the most arid, and it is hardly too much to say, repulsive description. It is impossible to imagine soil more evidently to the least experienced eye hopeless for any purpose useful to man, than these rolling and deeply water-scored hills. Nor has the region any of the characters of the picturesque. The soil is very friable, consisting of an easily disintegrated slaty limestone, of a pale whitey-brown in prevailing colour, varied here and there by stretches of similar material greenish in tint. For the most part the hill-sides are incapable of nourishing even a blade of grass; and they are evidently in the process of rapid removal into the Mediterranean, for the further extension of the plain that has been formed between Pisa and the shore since the time, only a few hundred years ago, when Pisa was a first-class naval power. All this, with the varied historical corollaries and speculations which it suggested, was highly interesting to my fellow-travellers.

But the ride, nowhere dangerous, though demanding some strong faith in the sure-footedness of Antonio's steeds, is not an easy one. The sun was beating with unmitigated glare on those utterly shadeless hill-sides. It was out of the question to attempt anything beyond a walk. The sides of the gullies, which had to be ascended and descended, though never reaching to the picturesque proportions of precipices, were yet sufficiently steep and rough to make very fatiguing riding for a lady

unaccustomed to such exercise. And George Eliot was in no very robust condition of health at the time. And despite his well dissembled anxiety I could see that Lewes was not easy respecting her capability of resisting the heat, the fatigue, and the unwonted exercise. But her cheerfulness and activity of interest never failed her for an instant. Her mind "made increment of everything." Nor even while I led her horse down some of the worst descents did the exigencies of the path avail to interrupt conversation, full of thought and far-reaching suggestiveness, as her talk ever was.

At last we reached the spot where the territory of the monastery commences; and it is one that impresses itself on the imagination and the memory in a measure not likely to be forgotten. The change is like a pantomime transformation scene! The traveller passes without the slightest intermediate gradation from the dreary scene which has been described, into the shade and the beauty of a region of magnificent and well-managed forest! The bodily delight of passing from the severe glare of the sun into this coolness, welcome alike to the skin and to the eye, was very great. And to both my companions, but especially to George Eliot, the great beauty of the scene we entered on gave the keenest pleasure.

Assuredly Saint Romuald in selecting a site for his Camaldolese did not derogate from the apparently instinctive wisdom which seems to have inspired the founders of monasteries of every order

and in every country of Europe. Invariably the positions of the religious houses were admirably well chosen; and that of Camaldoli is no exception to the rule. The convent is not visible from the spot where the visitor enters the forest boundary which marks the limit of the monastic domain. Nearly an hour's ride through scenery increasing in beauty with each step, where richly green lawns well stocked with cattle are contrasted wonderfully with the arid desolation so recently left behind, has still to be done ere the convent's hospitable door is reached.

The convent door, however, in our case was not reached, for the building used for the reception of visitors, and called the *forestieria*, occupies its humble position by the road side a hundred yards or so before the entrance to the monastery is reached. There Antonio halted his cavalcade, and while showing us our quarters with all the air of a master, sent one of his attendant lads to summon the *padre forestieraio*—the monk deputed by the society to receive strangers.

Had our party consisted of men only, we should have been received in the convent, where there was a very handsome suite of rooms reserved for the purpose. But females could not enter the precincts of the cloister. The father in question very shortly made his appearance, a magnificent figure, whose long black beard flowing over his perfectly clean white robe made as picturesque a presentment of a friar as could be desired. He

was extremely courteous, and seemed to desire nothing better than to talk *ad libitum*. But for my fellow travellers, rest after their broiling ride was the thing most urgently needed.

And this requirement brought us to the consideration of our accommodation for the night. The humble little *forestieria* at Camaldoli was not built for any such purpose. It never, of course, entered into the heads of the builders that need could ever arise for receiving any save male guests. And for such, as I have said, a handsome suite of large rooms, both sitting-rooms and bed-rooms, with huge fireplaces for the burning of colossal logs, is provided. Ordinary brethren of the order would not be lodged there. The magnificence is reserved for a Cardinal (Gregory XVI. who had been a Camaldolese frequently came here), or a travelling Bishop and his suite, or a heretic English or American milord! But not for any daughter of Eve! And the makeshift room over a carpenter's shop, which is called the *forestieria*, has been devoted to the purpose only in consequence of the incomprehensible mania of female English heretics for visiting the disciples of St. Romuald. And there the food supplied from the convent can be brought to them. But for the night? I had warned my friends that they would have to occupy different quarters; and it now became necessary to introduce George Eliot to the place she was to pass the night in.

At the distance of about twenty minutes' walk

above the convent, across a lovely but very steep extent of beautifully green turf, encircled by the surrounding forest, there is a cow-house, with an annexed lodging for the cowherd and his wife. And over the cow stable is—or was, for the monks have been driven away and all is altered now!—a bedchamber with three or four beds in it, which the toleration of the community has provided for the accommodation of the unaccountable female islanders. I have assisted in conveying parties of ladies up that steep grassy slope by the light of a full moon, when all the beds had to be somewhat more than fully occupied. But fortunately George Eliot had the whole chamber to herself—perhaps, however, not quite fortunately, for it was a very novel and not altogether reassuring experience for her to be left absolutely alone for the night, to the protection of an almost entirely unintelligible cowherd and his wife! But there was no help for it! G. H. Lewes did not seem to be quite easy about it; but George Eliot did not appear to be troubled by the slightest alarm or misgiving. She seemed, indeed, to enjoy all the novelty and strangeness of the situation; and when she bade us good-night from the one little window of her chamber over the cows, as we turned to walk down the slope to our grand bedrooms at the convent, she said she should be sure to be ready when we came for her in the morning, as the cows would call her, if the cowherds failed to do so.

The following morning we were to ride up the

mountain to the Sagro Eremo. Convent hours are early, and soon after the dawn we had convoyed our female companion down the hill to the little *forestieria* for breakfast, where the *padre forestieraio* gave us the best coffee we had had for many a day. George Eliot declared that she had had an exceptionally good night, and was delighted with the talk of the magnificently black-bearded father, who superintended our meal, while a lay brother waited on us.

The former was to start in a day or two on his triennial holiday, and he was much excited at the prospect of it. His *naïf* talk and quite childlike questions and speculations as to times and distances, and what could be done in a day, and the like, amused George Eliot much. In reckoning up his available hours he deducted so much in each day for the due performance of his canonical duties. I remarked to him that he could read the prescribed service in the diligence, as I had often seen priests doing. "Secular priests no doubt!" he said, "but that would not suit one of *us!*"

Our ride up to the Sagro Eremo was a thing to be remembered! I had seen and done it all before; but I had not seen or done it in company with George Eliot. It was like doing it with a new pair of eyes, and freshly inspired mind! The way is long and steep, through magnificent forests, with every here and there a lovely enclosed lawn, and fugitive peeps over the distant country. On our way up we met a singular procession coming down.

It consisted of a low large cart drawn by two oxen, and attended by several lay brothers and peasants, in the centre of which was seated an enormously fat brother of the order, whose white-robed bust with immense flowing white beard, emerging from a quantity of red wraps and coverings, that concealed the lower part of his person, made an extraordinary appearance. He was being brought down from the Sagro Eremo to the superior comfort of the convent, because he was unwell.

At the Sagro Eremo—the sacred hermitage—is seen the operation of the Camaldolese rule in its original strictness and perfection. At the convent itself it is, or has become, much relaxed in many respects. The Camaldolese, like other Carthusians, are properly *hermits*, that is to say, their life is not conventual, but eremitical. Each brother at the Sagro Eremo inhabits his own separately built cell, consisting of sleeping chamber, study, wood-room, and garden, all of microscopical dimensions. His food, exclusively vegetable, is passed in to him by a little turntable made in the wall. There is a refectory, in which the members of the community eat in common on two or three festivals in the course of the year. On these occasions only is any speech or oral communication between the members permitted. There is a library tolerably well furnished with historical as well as theological works. But it is evidently never used. Nor is there any sign that the little gardens are in any degree cultivated by the occupants of them. I remarked to George Eliot

on the strangeness of this abstinence from both the two permitted occupations, which might seem to afford some alleviation of the awful solitude and monotony of the eremitical life. But she remarked that the facts as we saw them were just such as she should have expected to find!

The Sagro Eremo is inhabited by three classes of inmates; firstly, by novices, who are not permitted to come down to the comparative luxury and comfort and milder climate of the convent till they have passed three or four years at the Sagro Eremo. Secondly, by those who have been sent thither from the convent below as punishment for some misdoing. Thirdly, by those who remain there of their own free will, in the hope of meriting a higher and more distinguished reward for their austerities in a future life. One such was pointed out to us, who had never left the Eremo for more than fifty years, a tall, very gaunt, very meagre old man with white hair, hollow cheeks, and parchment skin, a nose like an eagle's beak, and deep-set burning eyes—as typical a figure, in its way, as the rosy mountain of a man whom we met travelling down in his ox cart.

Lewes was always anxious lest George Eliot should over-tire herself. But she was insatiably interested both in the place and the denizens of it.

Then before supper at the *forestieria* was ready, our friend the father *forestieraio* insisted on showing us the growing crop of haricot beans, so celebrated

for their excellence that some of them were annually sent to Pope Gregory the Sixteenth as long as he lived.

Then followed another night in the cow-house for George Eliot and for us in the convent, and the next morning we started with Antonio and his horses for La Vernia.

The ride thither from Camaldoli, though less difficult, is also less peculiar than that from Prato Vecchio to the latter monastery, at least, until La Vernia is nearly reached. The *penna* (Cornish, Pen; Cumbrian, Penrith; Spanish Peña) on which the monastery is built is one of the numerous isolated rocky points which have given their names to the Pennine Alps and Apennines. The Penna de la Vernia rises very steeply from the rolling ground below, and towers above the traveller with its pyramidal point in very suggestive fashion. The well-wooded sides of the conical hill are diversified by emergent rocks, and the plume of trees on the summit seems to suggest a Latin rather than a Celtic significance for the "Penna."

It is a long and tedious climb to the convent, but the picturesque beauty of the spot, the charm of the distant outlook, and above all the historical interest of the site, rewards the visitor's toil abundantly. There is a *forestieria* here also, within the precincts of the convent, but not within the technical "cloister." It is simply a room in which visitors of either sex may partake of such food as the poor Franciscans can furnish them, which is by no means such as the

more well-to-do Carthusians of Camaldoli supply to their guests. Nor have the quarters set apart for the sleeping accommodation of male visitors within the cloister anything of the spacious old-world grandeur of the strangers' suite of rooms at the latter monastery. The difficulty also of arranging for the night's lodging of a female is much greater at La Vernia. There is indeed a very fairly comfortable house, kept under the management of two sisters of the order of Saint Francis, expressly for the purpose of lodging lady pilgrims to the shrine. For in former days—scarcely now, I think—the wives of the Florentine aristocracy used to undertake a pilgrimage to La Vernia as a work of devotion. But this house is at the bottom of the long ascent—nearly an hour's severe climb from the convent—an arrangement which necessarily involves much additional fatigue to a lady visitor.

George Eliot writes to Miss Sara Hennell on the 19th of June, a letter inserted by Mr. Cross in his admirable biography of his wife—"I wish you could have shared the pleasures of our last expedition from Florence to the monasteries of Camaldoli and La Vernia. I think it was just the sort of thing you would have entered into with thorough zest." And she goes on to speak of La Vernia in a manner which seems to show that it was the latter establishment which most keenly interested and impressed her. She was in fact under the spell of the great and still potent personality of Saint Francis, which informs with his

memory every detail of the buildings and rocks around you. Each legend was full of interest for her. The alembic of her mind seemed to have the secret of distilling from traditions, which in their grossness the ordinary visitor turns from with a smile of contempt, the spiritual value they once possessed for ages of faith, or at least the poetry with which the simple belief of those ages has invested them. Nobody could be more alive to every aspect of natural beauty than she showed herself during the whole of this memorable excursion. But at La Vernia the human interest over-rode the simply æsthetic one.

Her day was a most fatiguing one. And when Lewes and I wearily climbed the hill on foot, after escorting her to her sleeping quarters, he was not a little anxious lest on the morrow she should find herself unable for the ride which was to take us to the spot where a carriage was available for our return to Florence.

But it was not so. She slept well under the care of the Franciscan nuns, who managed to get her a cup of milkless coffee in the morning, and so save her from the necessity of again climbing the hill. A charming drive through the Casentino, or valley of the Upper Arno, showing us the aspect of a Tuscan valley very different from that of the Lower Arno, brought to an end an expedition which has always remained in my memory as one of the most delightful of my life.

I had much talk with George Eliot during the

time—very short at Florence—when she was maturing her Italian novel, *Romola*. Of course, I knew that she was digesting the acquisitions of each day with a view to writing; but I had not the slightest idea of the period to which her inquiries were specially directed, or of the nature of the work intended. But when I read *Romola*, I was struck by the wonderful power of absorption manifested in every page of it. The rapidity with which she squeezed out the essence and significance of a most complex period of history, and assimilated the net results of its many-sided phases, was truly marvellous.

Nevertheless, in drawing the girl Romola, her subjectivity has overpowered her objectivity. Romola is not—could never have been—the product of the period and of the civilisation from which she is described as having issued. There is far too much of George Eliot in her. It was a period, it is true, in which female culture trod upon the heels of the male culture of the time perhaps more closely than it has ever done since. But let Vittoria Colonna be accepted, as probably she may be, as a fair exponent of the highest point to which that culture had reached, and an examination of the sonnets into which she has put her highest thoughts and aspirations together with a comparison of those with the mental calibre of Romola will, I think, support the view I have taken.

Tito, on the other hand, gives us with truly wonderful accuracy and vigour "the very form and

pressure of the time." The pages which describe him read like a quintessential distillation of the Florentine story of the time and of the human results which it had availed to produce. The character of Savonarola, of course, remains, and must remain, a problem, despite all that has been done for the elucidation of it since *Romola* was written. But her reading of it is most characteristically that which her own idiosyncrasy—so akin to it in its humanitarian aspects, so superior to it in its methods of considering man and his relations to the unseen—would lead one to expect.

In 1869—70, George Eliot and Mr. Lewes visited Italy for the fourth time. I had since the date of their former visit quitted my house in Florence, and established myself in a villa and small *podere* at Ricorboli, a commune outside the Florentine Porta San Niccolò. And there I had the great pleasure of receiving them under my roof, assisted in doing so by my present wife. Their visit was all too short a one—less than a week, I think.

But one knows a person with whom one has passed even that short time under the same roof far better than can ever be the result of a very much longer acquaintanceship during which one meets only in the ordinary intercourse of society. And the really intimate knowledge of her which I was thus enabled to obtain has left with me the abiding conviction that she was intellectually by far the most extraordinarily gifted person it has ever been my good fortune to meet. I do not insist much on the

uniform and constant tender consideration for others, which was her habitual frame of mind, for I have known others of whom the same might have been said. It is true that it is easy for those in the enjoyment of that vigorous health, which renders mere living a pleasure, to be kindly; and that George Eliot was never betrayed by suffering, however protracted and severe, into the smallest manifestation of impatience or unkindly feeling. But neither is this trained excellence of charity matchless among women. What was truly, in my experience, matchless, was simply the power of her intelligence; the precision, the promptitude, the rapidity (though her manner was by no means rapid), the largeness of the field of knowledge, the compressed outcome of which she was at any moment ready to bring to bear on the topic in hand; the sureness and lucidity of her induction; the clearness of vision, to which muddle was as impossible and abhorrent as a vacuum is supposed to be to nature; and all this lighted up and gilded by an infinite sense of, and capacity for, humour,—this was what rendered her to me a marvel, and an object of inexhaustible study and admiration.

To me, though I never passed half an hour in conversation with her without a renewed perception of the vastness of the distance which separated her intelligence from mine, she was a companion each minute of intercourse with whom was a delight. But I can easily understand that, despite her perfect readiness to place herself for the nonce on the

intellectual level of those with whom she chanced to be brought in contact, her society may not have been agreeable to all. I remember a young lady—by no means a stupid or unintelligent one—telling me that being with George Eliot always gave her a pain in "her mental neck," just as an hour passed in a picture gallery did to her physical neck. She was fatigued by the constant attitude of looking up. But had she not been an intelligent girl, she need not have constantly looked up. It would be a great mistake to suppose that George Eliot's mental habits exacted such an attitude from those she conversed with.

Another very prominent and notable characteristic of that most remarkable idiosyncrasy was the large and almost universal tolerance with which George Eliot regarded her fellow creatures. Often and often has her tone of mind reminded me of the French saying, "*Tout connaître ce serait tout pardonner!*" I think that of all the human beings I have ever known or met George Eliot would have made the most admirable, the most perfect father confessor. I can conceive nothing more healing, more salutary to a stricken and darkened soul, than unrestricted confession to such a mind and such an intelligence as hers. Surely a Church with a whole priesthood of such confessors would produce a model world.

And with all this I am well persuaded that her mind was at that time in a condition of growth. Her outlook on the world could not have been said

at that time to have been a happy one. And my subsequent acquaintance with her in after years led me to feel sure that this had become much modified. She once said to me at Florence that she wished she never had been born! I was deeply pained and shocked; but I am convinced that the utterance was the result, not of irritation and impatience caused by pain, but of the influence exercised on the tone of thought and power of thinking by bodily malady. I feel sure that she would not have given expression to such a sentiment when I and my wife were subsequently staying with her and Lewes at their lovely home in Surrey. She had by that time, I cannot but think, reached a brighter outlook and happier frame of mind.

We had as neighbours at Ricorboli, although on the opposite bank of the Arno, our old and very highly-valued friends, Mr. G. P. Marsh, the United States Minister, and his charming wife, to whom for the sake of both parties we were desirous of introducing our distinguished guests. We thought it right to explain to Mrs. Marsh fully all that was not strictly normal in the relationship of George Eliot and G. H. Lewes before bringing them together, and were assured both by her and by her husband that they saw nothing in the circumstances which need deprive them of the pleasure of making the acquaintance of persons whom it would be so agreeable to them to know. The Marsh's were at that time giving rather large weekly receptions in the fine rooms of their villa, and our friends accompanied us

to one of these. It was very easy to see that both ladies appreciated each other. There was a large gathering, mostly of Americans, and Lewes exerted himself to be agreeable and amusing—which he always was, when he wished to be, to a degree rarely surpassed.

He and I used to walk about the country together when "Polly" was indisposed for walking; and I found him an incomparable companion, whether a gay or a grave mood were uppermost. He was the best *raconteur* I ever knew, full of anecdote, and with a delicious perception of humour. She also, as I have said—very needlessly to those who have read her books—had an exquisite feeling and appreciation of the humorous, abundantly sufficient if unsupported by other examples, to put Thackeray's dicta on the subject of woman's capacity for humour out of court. But George Eliot's sense of humour was different in quality rather than in degree from that which Lewes so abundantly possessed. And it was a curious and interesting study to observe the manifestation of the quality in both of them. It was not that the humour, which he felt and expressed, was less delicate in quality or less informed by deep human insight and the true *nihil-humanum-a-me-alienum-puto* spirit than hers, but it was less wide and far-reaching in its purview of human feelings and passions and interests; more often individual in its applicability, and less drawn from the depths of human nature as exhibited by types and classes. And often they would cap each other with a mutual relationship similar to that between a rule of syntax

and its example, sometimes the one coming first and sometimes the other.

I remember that during the happy days of this visit I was writing a novel, afterwards published under the title of *A Siren*, and Lewes asked me to show him the manuscript, then nearly completed. Of course I was only too glad to have the advantage of his criticism. He was much struck by the story, but urged me to invert the order in which it was told. The main incident of the plot is a murder caused by jealousy, and I had begun by narrating the circumstances which led up to it in their natural sequence. He advised me to begin by bringing before the reader the murdered body of the victim, and then unfold the causes which had led to the crime. And I followed his advice.

The murder is represented as having been committed on a sleeping person by piercing the heart with a needle, and then artistically covering the almost imperceptible orifice of the wound with wax, in such sort as to render the discovery of the wound and the cause of death almost impossible even by professional eyes. And I may mention that the facts were related to me by a distinguished man of science at Florence, as having really occurred.

Perhaps, since I have been led to speak of this story of mine, I may be excused for recording an incident connected with it, which occurred some years subsequently at Rome, in the drawing-room of Mrs. Marsh. The scene of the story is Ravenna. And Mrs. Marsh specially introduced me to a very

charming young couple, the Count and Countess Pasolini of Ravenna, as the author of *A Siren.* They said they had been most anxious to know who could have written that book! They thought that no Englishman could have been resident at Ravenna without their having known him, or at least known *of* him. And yet it was evident that a writer, who could photograph the life and society of Ravenna as it had been photographed in the book in question must have resided there and lived in the midst of it for some time. But I never was in Ravenna for a longer time than a week in my life.

It was many years after the visit of George Eliot and Mr. Lewes to my house at Ricorboli that I and my wife visited them at The Heights, Witley, in Surrey. I found that George Eliot had grown! She was evidently happier. There was the same specially quiet and one may say harmonious gentleness about her manner and her thought and her ways. But her outlook on life seemed to be a brighter, a larger, and as I cannot doubt, a healthier one. She would no longer, I am well assured, have talked of regretting that she had been born! It would be to give an erroneous impression if I were to say that she seemed to be more in charity with all men, for assuredly I never knew her otherwise. But, if the words may be used, as I think they may be understood, without irreverence, or any meaning that would be akin to blasphemy, she seemed to me to be more in charity with her Creator. The ways of God to man had become

more justified to her; and her outlook as to the futurity of the world was a more hopeful one. Of course optimism had with her to be long-sighted! But she seemed to have become reconciled to the certainty that he who stands on a lofty eminence must needs see long stretches of dusty road across the plains beneath him.

Nothing could be more enjoyable than the evenings passed by the *partie carrée* consisting of herself and Lewes, and my wife and myself. I am afflicted by hardness of hearing, which shuts me out from many of the pleasures of society. And George Eliot had that excellency in woman, a low voice. Yet, partly no doubt by dint of an exertion which her kindness prompted, but in great measure from the perfection of her dainty articulation, I was able to hear her more perfectly than I generally hear anybody. One evening Mr. and Mrs. Du Maurier joined us. The Lewes's had a great regard for Mr. Du Maurier, and spoke to us in a most feeling way of the danger which had then recently threatened the eyesight of that admirable artist. We had music; and Mr. Du Maurier sang a drinking song, accompanying himself on the piano. George Eliot had specially asked for this song, saying, I remember, "A good drinking song is the only form of intemperance I admire!"

I think also that Lewes seemed in higher spirits than when I had been with him at Florence. But this was no more than an additional testimony to the fact that *she* was happier.

She also was, I take it, in better health, for we had some most delightful walks over the exceptionally beautiful country in the neighbourhood of their house, to a greater extent than she would, I think, have been capable of at Florence.

One day we made a most memorable excursion to visit Tennyson at Black Down. It was the first time I had ever seen him. He walked with us round his garden, and to a point finely overlooking the country below, charmingly varied by cultivated land, meadow and woodland. It was a magnificent day; but as I looked over the landscape I thought I understood why the woods, which one looks down on from a similar Italian height, are called *macchie* —stains, whereas our ordinarily more picturesque language knows no such term and no such image. In looking over a wide-spread Italian landscape one is struck by the accuracy and picturesque truth of the image; but it needs the sun and the light and the atmosphere of Italy to produce the contrast of light and shade which justifies the phrase.

Our friends were evidently *personæ gratæ* at the court of the Laureate; and after our walk he gave us the exquisite treat of reading to us the just completed manuscript of *Rizpah*. And how he read it! Everybody thinks that he has been impressed by that wonderful poem to the full extent of the effect that it is capable of producing. They would be astonished at the increase of weird terror which thrills the hearer of the poet's own recital of it.

He was very good-natured about it. It was

explained to him by George Eliot that I should not be able to enjoy the reading unless I were close to him, so he placed me by his side. He detected me availing myself of that position to use my good eyes as well as my bad ears, and protested; but on my appeal *ad misrecordiam*, and assurance that I should so enjoy the promised treat to infinitely greater effect, he allowed me to look over his shoulder as he read. After *Rizpah* he read the *Northern Cobbler* to us, also with wonderful effect. The difference between reading the printed lines and hearing them so read is truly that between looking on a black and white engraving and the coloured picture from which it has been taken. Another thing also struck me. The provincial dialect, which, when its peculiarities are indicated by letters, looks so uncouth as to be sometimes almost puzzling, seemed to produce no difficulty at all as he read it, though he in nowise mitigated it in the least. It seemed the absolutely natural and necessary presentation of the thoughts and emotions to be rendered. It was, in fact, a dramatic rendering of them of the highest order.

I remember with equal vividness hearing Lowell read some of his *Biglow Papers* in the drawing-room of my valued friend Arthur Dexter, of Boston, when there were no others present save him and his mother and my wife and myself. And that also was a great treat; that also was the addition of colour to the black and white of the printed page. But the difference between reading and

hearing was not so great as in the case of the Laureate.

When, full of the delight that had been afforded us, we were taking our leave of him, our host laid on us his strict injunctions to say no word to any one of what we had heard, adding with a smile that was half *naïf*, half funning, and wholly comic, "The newspaper fellows, you know, would get hold of the story, and they would not do it as well!"

And then our visit to the Lewes's in their lovely home drew to an end, and we said our farewells, little thinking as we four stood in that porch, that we should never in this world look on their faces more.

The history of George Eliot's intellect is to a great extent legible in her books. But there are thousands of her readers in both hemispheres who would like to possess a more concrete image of her in their minds—an image which should give back the personal peculiarities of face, voice, and manner, that made up her outward form and semblance. I cannot pretend to the power of creating such an image; but I may record a few traits which will be set down at all events as truthfully as I can give them.

She was not, as the world in general is aware, a handsome, or even a personable woman. Her face was long; the eyes not large nor beautiful in colour—they were, I think, of a greyish blue—the hair, which she wore in old-fashioned braids coming low down on either side of her face, of a

rather light brown. It was streaked with grey when last I saw her. Her figure was of middle height, large-boned and powerful. Lewes often said that she inherited from her peasant ancestors a frame and constitution originally very robust. Her head was finely formed, with a noble and well-balanced arch from brow to crown. The lips and mouth possessed a power of infinitely varied expression. George Lewes once said to me when I made some observation to the effect that she had a sweet face (I meant that the face expressed great sweetness), "You might say what a sweet hundred faces! I look at her sometimes in amazement. Her countenance is constantly changing." The said lips and mouth were distinctly sensuous in form and fulness.

She has been compared to the portraits of Savonarola (who was frightful) and of Dante (who though stern and bitter-looking, was handsome). *Something* there was of both faces in George Eliot's physiognomy. Lewes told us in her presence, of the exclamation uttered suddenly by some one to whom she was pointed out at a place of public entertainment—I believe it was at a Monday Popular Concert in St. James's Hall. "That," said a bystander, "is George Eliot." The gentleman to whom she was thus indicated gave one swift, searching look and exclaimed *sotto voce*, "Dante's aunt!" Lewes thought this happy, and he recognised the kind of likeness that was meant to the great singer of the *Divine Comedy*. She herself

playfully disclaimed any resemblance to Savonarola. But, although such resemblance was very distant—Savonarola's peculiarly unbalanced countenance being a strong caricature of hers—some likeness there was.

Her speaking voice was, I think, one of the most beautiful I ever heard, and she used it *conscientiously*, if I may say so. I mean that she availed herself of its modulations to give thrilling emphasis to what was profound in her utterances, and sweetness to what was gentle or playful. She bestowed great care too on her enunciation, disliking the slipshod mode of pronouncing which is so common. I have several times heard her declare with enthusiasm that ours is a beautiful language, a noble language even to the ear, when properly spoken; and imitate with disgust the short, *snappy*, inarticulate way in which many people utter it. There was no touch of pedantry or affectation in her own measured, careful speech, although I can well imagine that she might have been accused of both by those persons—unfortunately more numerous than could be desired—who seem to take it for granted that *all* difference from one's neighbour, and especially a difference in the direction of superiority, must be affected.

It has been thought by some persons that the influence of George Henry Lewes on her literary work was not a fortunate one, that he fostered too much the scientific bent of her mind to the detriment of its artistic richness. I do not myself hold this opinion. I am even inclined to think that but

for his companionship and encouragement she might possibly never have written fiction at all. It is, I believe, impossible to over-estimate the degree to which the sunshine of his complete and understanding sympathy and his adoring affection developed her literary powers. She has written something to this effect—perhaps more than once; I have not her biography at hand at this moment for reference—in a letter to Miss Sara Hennell. And no one who saw them together in anything like intimate intercourse could doubt that it was true. As I have said before, Lewes worshipped her, and it is considered a somewhat unwholesome experience to be worshipped. Fortunately the process is not so common as to constitute one of the dangers of life for the average human being! But in George Eliot's case I really believe the process was not deleterious. Her nature was at once stimulated and steadied by Lewes's boundless faith in her powers, and boundless admiration for their manifestation. Nor was it a case of sitting like an idol to be praised and incensed. Her own mental attitude towards Lewes was one of warm admiration. She thought most highly of his scientific attainments, whether well foundedly or mistakenly I cannot pretend to gauge with accuracy. But she also admired and enjoyed the sparkling brightness of his talk, and the dramatic vivacity with which he entered into conversation and discussion, grave or gay. And on these points I may venture to record my opinion that she was quite

right. I always used to think that the touch of Bohemianism about Lewes had a special charm for her. It must have offered so piquant a contrast with the middle-class surroundings of her early life. I observed that she listened with great complacency to his talk of theatrical things and people. Lewes was fond of talking about acting and actors, and in telling stories of celebrated theatrical personages, would imitate—half involuntarily perhaps—their voice and manner. I remember especially his doing this with reference to Macready.

Both of them loved music extremely. It was a curious, and, to me, rather pathetic study to watch Lewes—a man naturally self-sufficient (I do not use the word in any odious sense), of a combative turn of intellect, and with scarcely any diffidence in his nature—so humbly admitting, and even insisting upon, "Polly's" superiority to himself in every department. Once when he was walking with my wife in the garden of their house in Surrey, she turned the conversation which had been touching other topics to speak of George Eliot. "Oh," said Lewes, stopping short and looking at her with those bright eyes of his, "*Your blood be on your own head!* I didn't begin it; but if you wish to speak of her, *I* am always ready." It was this complete candour, and the genuineness of his admiring love for her, which made its manifestations delightful, and freed them from offence.

CHAPTER XVI.

I HAVE a great many letters from G. H. Lewes, and from George Eliot. Many of the latter are addressed to my wife. And many, especially of those from Lewes, relating as they do mainly to matters of literary business, though always containing characteristic touches, are not of sufficient general interest to make it worth while to transcribe them for publication. In no case is there any word in any of them that would make it expedient to withhold them on any other ground. I might perhaps have introduced them into my narrative as nearly as possible at the times to which chronologically they refer. But it has seemed to me so probable that there may be many readers who may be glad of an opportunity of seeing these letters without feeling disposed to give their time to the rest of these volumes, that I have thought it best to throw them together in this place.

I will begin with one written from Blandford Square, by George Eliot to me, which is of great interest. It bears no date whatever, save that of

place; but the subject of it dates it with considerable accuracy.

"DEAR MR. TROLLOPE,—I am very grateful to you for your notes. Concerning *netto di specchio*, I have found a passage in Varchi which decides the point according to *your* impression." [Passages equally decisive might be found *passim* in the old Florentine historians. And I ought to have referred her to them. But as she had altogether mistaken the meaning of the phrase, I had insinuated my correction as little presumptuously as I could.]

"My inference had been gathered from the vague use of the term to express disqualification [*i.e.* NON *netto di specchio* expressed disqualification]. But I find from Varchi, b. viii. that the *specchio* in question was a public book, in which the names of all debtors to the *Commune* were entered. Thus your doubt [no doubt at all!] has been a very useful caveat to me.

"Concerning the Bardi, my authority for making them originally *popolani* is G. Villani. He says, c. xxxix., '*e gia cominciavano a venire possenti i Frescobaldi e Bardi e Mozzi* ma di piccolo cominciamento.' And c. lxxxi. '*e questi furono le principale case de' Guelfi che uscirono di Firenze. Del Sesto d' Oltr' Arno, i Rossi, Nerli, e parte de' Manelli, Bardi, e Frescobaldi de' Popoloni dal detto Sesto*, case nobili *Canigiani*,' &c. These passages corrected my previous impression that they were originally Lombard nobles.

[It needs some familiarity with the Florentine chroniclers to understand that the words quoted by no means indicate that the families named were not of patrician origin. "There walked into the lobby with the Radicals, Lord —— and Mr. ——," would just as much prove that the persons named had not belonged to the class of landowners. But the passage is interesting as showing the great care she took to make her Italian novel historically accurate. And it is to be remembered that she came to the subject absolutely new to it. She would have known otherwise, that the *Case* situated in the Oltr' Arno quarter, were almost all noble. That ward of the city was the Florentine *quartier St. Germain.*]

"Concerning the phrase *in piazza*, and *in mercato*, my choice of them was partly founded on the colloquial usage as represented by Sacchetti, whose dialogue is intensely idiomatic. Also *in piazza* is, I believe, used by the historians (I think even by Machiavelli), when speaking of popular *turn-outs*. The ellipse took my fancy because of its colloquial stamp. But I gather from your objection that it seems too barbarous in a modern Italian ear. Will you whisper your final opinion in Mr. Lewes's ear on Monday?

[I do not remember what the ellipse in question was. As regards the use of the phrase *in piazza* she is perfectly right. The term keeps the same meaning to the present day, and is equivalent in political language to *the street.*]

"*Boto* was used on similar grounds, and as it is

recognised by the *Voc. della, Crusca*, I think I may venture to keep it, having a weakness for those indications of the processes by which language is modified.

[*Boto* for *voto* is a Florentinism which may be heard to the present day, though the vast majority of strangers would never hear it, or understand it if they did. George Eliot no doubt met with it in some of those old chroniclers who wrote exactly as not only the lower orders, but the generality of their fellow citizens, were speaking around them. And her use of it testifies to the minuteness of her care to reproduce the form and pressure of the time of which she was writing.]

"Once more thank you, though my gratitude is in danger of looking too much like a lively sense of anticipated favours, for I mean to ask you to take other trouble yet.

"Yours very truly,

"MARION E. LEWES."

The following letter, written from Blandford Square on the 5th July, 1861, is, as regards the first three pages, from him, and the last from her.

"MY DEAR TROLLOPE,—We have now read *La Beata* [my first novel], and must tell you how charmed we have been with it. *Nina* herself is perfectly exquisite and individual, and her story is full of poetry and pathos. Also one feels a breath from the Val d'Arno rustling amid the pages, and a

sense of Florentine life, such as one rarely gets out of books. The critical objection I should make to it, apart from minor points, is that often you spoil the artistic attitude by adopting a critical antagonistic attitude, by which I mean that instead of painting the thing objectively, you present it critically, *with an eye to the opinions* likely to be formed by certain readers; thus, instead of relying on the simple presentation of the fact of Nina's innocence you *call up* the objection you desire to anticipate by side glances at the worldly and 'knowing' reader's opinions. In a word I feel as if you were not engrossed by your subject, but were sufficiently aloof from it to contemplate it as a spectator, which is an error in art. Many of the remarks are delicately felt and finely written. The whole book comes from a noble nature, and so it impresses the reader. But I may tell you what Mrs. Carlyle said last night, which will in some sense corroborate what I have said. In her opinion you would have done better to make two books of it, one the love story, and one a description of Florentine life. She admires the book very much I should add. Now, although I cannot by any means agree with that criticism of hers, I fancy the origin of it was some such feeling, as I have endeavoured to indicate in saying you are often critical when you should be simply objective.

"We had a pleasant journey home over the St. Gothard, and found our boy very well and happy at Hofwyl, and our bigger boy *ditto* awaiting us here.

Polly is very well, and as you may imagine talks daily of Florence and our delightful trip, our closer acquaintance with you and yours being among the most delightful of our reminiscences.

"Yesterday Anthony dined with us, and as he had never seen Carlyle he was glad to go down with us to tea at Chelsea. Carlyle had read and *agreed* with the West Indian book, and the two got on very well together; both Carlyle and Mrs. Carlyle liking Anthony, and I suppose it was reciprocal, though I did not see him afterwards to hear what he thought. He had to run away to catch his train.

"He told us of the sad news of Mrs. Browning's death. Poor Browning! That was my first, and remains my constant reflection. When people love each other and have lived together any time they ought to die together. For myself I should not care in the least about dying. The dreadful thing to me would be to live after losing, if I should ever lose, the one who has made life for me. Of course you who all knew and valued her will feel the loss, but I cannot think of anybody's grief but his.

"The next page must be left for Polly's postscript, so I shall only send my kindest regards and wishes to Mrs. Trollope and the biggest of kisses to *la cantatrice*" [my poor girl Bice!].

"Ever faithfully yours,

"G. H. LEWES."

"DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE,—While I am reading *La Beata* I constantly feel as if Mr. Trollope were present telling it all to me *vivâ voce.* It seems to me more thoroughly and fully like himself than any of his other books. And in spite of our having had the most of his society away from you" [on our Camaldoli excursion] "you are always part of his presence to me in a hovering aërial fashion. So it seems quite natural that a letter addressed to him should have a postscript addressed to you. Pray reckon it amongst the good you do in this world, that you come very often into our thoughts and conversation. We see comparatively so few people that we are apt to recur to recollections of those we like best with almost childish frequency, and a little fresh news about you would be a welcome variety, especially the news that you had quite shaken off that spine indisposition which was still clinging to you that last morning when we said our good-byes. We have enough knowledge about you and your world to interpret all the details you can give us. But our words about our own home doings would be very vague and colourless to you. You must always imagine us coming to see you and wanting to know as much about you as we can, and like a charming hostess gratify that want. I must thank you for the account of Cavour in *The Athenæum*, which stirred me strongly. I am afraid I have what *The Saturday Review* would call 'a morbid delight in deathbeds'—not having reached that

lofty superiority which considers it bad taste to allude to them.

"How is Beatrice, the blessed and blessing? That will always be a history to interest us—how her brown hair darkens, how her voice deepens and strengthens, and how you get more and more delight in her. I need send no separate message to Mr. Trollope, before I say that

"I am always yours, with lively remembrance,

"MARION E. LEWES."

It needed George Eliot's fine and minute handwriting to put all this into one page of note-paper.

The next letter that came from Blandford Square, dated 9th December, 1861, was also a joint one, the larger portion of which however is from her pen.

"DEAR GOOD PEOPLE,—If your ears burn as often as you are talked about in this house, there must be an unpleasant amount of aural circulation to endure! And as the constant *refrain* is, 'Really we must write to them, that they may not altogether slip away from us,' I have this morning screwed my procrastination to the writing-desk.

"First and foremost let us know how you are, and what are the results of the bathing. Then a word as to the new novel, or any other work, will be acceptable. I lend about *La Beata* in all good quarters, and always hear golden opinions from all sorts of people. Of course you hear from Anthony.

Is he prosperous and enjoying his life? The book will have an enormous sale just now; but I fancy he will find more animosity and less friendliness than he expected, to judge from the state of exasperation against the Britisher, which seems to be general.

"We have been pursuing the even baritone—I wish I could say tenor—of our way. My health became seriously alarming in September, so we went off to Malvern for a fortnight; and there the mountain air, exercise, and regular diet set me up, so that I have been in better training for work than I had been for a long while. Polly has not been strong, yet not materially amiss. But as she will add a postscript to this I shall leave her to speak for herself.

"In your (T. A. T.) book huntings, if you could lay your hand on a copy of Hermolaus Barbarus, *Compendium Scientiæ Naturalis*, 1553, or any of Telesio's works, think of me and pounce on them. I was going to bother you about the new edition of Galileo, but fortunately I fell in with the Milan edition cheap, and contented myself with that. Do you know what there is *new* in the Florentine edition? I suppose you possess it, as you do so many enviable books.

"We heard the other day that Miss Blagden had come to stay in London for the winter, so Polly sent a message to her to say how glad we should be to see her. If she comes she will bring us some account of *casa* Trollope.

"When you next pass Giotto's tower salute it for me; it is one of my dearest Florentines, and always beckoning to us to come back.

"Ever your faithful friend,

"G. H. LEWES."

She writes:—

"DEAR FRIENDS,—Writing letters or asking for them is not always the way to make one's memory agreeable, but you are not among those people who shudder at letters, since you *did* say you would like to hear from us, and let us hear from you occasionally. I have no good news to tell about myself; but to have my husband back again and enjoying his work is quite enough happiness to fall to one woman's share in this world, where the stock of happiness is so moderate and the claimants so many. He is deep in Aristotle's *Natural Science* as the first step in a history of science, which he has for a long while been hoping that he should be able to write. So you will understand his demand for brown folios. Indeed, he is beginning to have a slight contempt for authors sufficiently known to the vulgar to be inserted in biographical dictionaries. Hermolaus Barbarus is one of those distinguished by omission in some chief works of that kind; and we learned to our surprise from a don at Cambridge that *he* had never heard the name. Let us hope there is an Olympus for forgotten authors.

"Our trial of the water cure at Malvern made us think with all the more emphasis of the possible effect on a too delicate and fragile friend at Florence." [My wife.] "It really helped to mend George. And as I hope the Florentine hydropathist may not be a quack as Dr. —— at Malvern certainly is, I shall be disappointed if there is no good effect to be traced to 'judicious packing and sitz baths' that you can tell us of. Did Beatrice enjoy her month's dissipation at Leghorn? And is the voice prospering? Don't let her quite forget us. We make rather a feeble attempt at musical Saturday evenings, having a new grand piano, which stimulates musical desires. But we want a good violin and violoncello—difficult to be found among amateurs. Having no sunshine one needs music all the more. It would be difficult for you to imagine very truthfully what sort of atmosphere we have been living in here in London for the last month—warm, heavy, dingy grey. I have seen some sunshine once—in a dream. Do tell us all you can about yourselves. It seems only the other day that we were shaking you by the hand; and all details will be lit up as if by your very voice and looks. Say a kind word for me sometimes to the bright-eyed lady by whose side I sat in your balcony the evening of the National Fête. At the moment I cannot recall her name. We are going now to the British Museum to read —a fearful way of getting knowledge. If I had Aladdin's lamp I should certainly use it to get

books served up to me at a moment's notice. It may be better to search for truth than to have it at hand without seeking, but with books I should take the other alternative.

"Ever yours,

"M. E. LEWES."

The lady in the balcony spoken of in the above letter was Signora Mignaty, the niece of Sir Frederick Adam, whom I had known long years previously in Rome, and who had married Signor Mignaty, a Greek artist, and was (and is) living in Florence. She was, in fact, the niece of the Greek lady Sir Frederick married. I remember her aunt, a very beautiful woman. The niece, Signorina Margherita Albani as she was when I first knew her at eighteen years old in Rome, inherited so much of the beauty of her race that the Roman artists were constantly imploring her to sit for them. She has made herself known in the literary world by several works, especially by a recent book on Correggio, his life and works, published in French.

The next letter from Lewes, written from Blandford Square on the 2nd June, without date of year, but probably 1863, is of more interest to myself than to the public. But I may perhaps be permitted to indulge my vanity by publishing it as a testimony that his previous praise of what I had written was genuine, and not merely the laudatory compliments of a correspondent.

"My dear Trollope,—Enclosed is the proof you were good enough to say you would correct. When am I to return the compliment?

"I have finished *Marietta*. Its picture of Italian life is extremely vivid and interesting, but it is a long way behind *La Beata* in interest of story. I have just finished one volume of Anthony's *America*, and am immensely pleased with it—so much so that I hope to do something towards counteracting the nasty notice in the *Saturday*.

"Ever yours faithfully,

"G. H. Lewes."

The next letter is from Lewes, dated "The Priory, North Bank, Regent's Park, 20th March, 1864:—

"My dear Trollope,—My eldest boy, who spends his honeymoon in Florence (is not that sugaring jam tart?), brings you this greeting from your silent but affectionate friends. Tell him all particulars about yourselves, and he will transmit them in his letters to us. First and foremost about the health of your wife, and how this bitter winter has treated her. Next about Bice, and then about yourself.

"We rejoice in the prospect of your *History of Florence*, and I am casting about, hoping to find somebody to review it worthily for the *Fortnightly Review*. By the way, would not you or your wife help me there also! Propose your subjects!

"I hope you will like our daughter. She is a noble creature; and Charles is a lucky dog (his father's luck) to get such a wife.

"We have been and are in a poor state of health, but manage to scramble on. Charles will tell you all there is to tell. With our love to your dear wife and Bice,

"Believe me, ever faithfully yours,

"G. H. LEWES."

Shortly after receiving this my wife had a letter from George Eliot, from Venice, dated 15th May, 1864. She writes from the "Hôtel de Ville."

"MY DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE,—I wonder whether you are likely to be at Lake Como next month, or at any other place that we could take on our way to the Alps. It would make the prospect of our journey homeward much pleasanter if we could count on seeing you for a few hours; and I will not believe that you will think me troublesome if I send the question to you. I am rather discontented with destiny that she has not let us see anything of you for nearly three years. And I hope you too will not be sorry to take me by the hand again.

"My ground for supposing it not unlikely that you will be at one of the lakes, is the report I heard from Mr. Pigott, that such a plan was hovering in your mind. My chief fear is that our return, which is not likely at the latest to be later than the middle of June, may be too early for us to find you.

"We reached Venice three days ago, after a short stay at Milan, and have the delight of finding everything more beautiful than it was to us four years ago. That is a satisfactory experience to us, who are getting old, and are afraid of the traditional loss of glory on the grass and all else, with which melancholy poets threaten us.

"Mr. Lewes says I am to say the sweetest things that can be said with propriety to you, and love to Bice, to whose memory he appeals, in spite of all the friends she has made since he had the last kiss from her.

"I too have love to send to Bice, whom I expect to see changed like a lily-bud to something more definitely promising. Mr. Trollope, I suppose, is in England by this time, else I should say all affectionate regards from us both to him. I am writing under difficulties.

"Ever, dear Mrs. Trollope,

"Very sincerely yours,

"M. E. LEWES."

Here is another from Lewes, which the post-mark only shows to have been written in 1865:—

"MY DEAR TROLLOPE,—Thank Signor —— for the offer of his paper, and express to him my regret that in the present crowded state of the *Review* I cannot find a place for it. Don't you however run away with the idea that I don't want *your* contributions on the same ground! The fact is ——'s paper

is too wordy and heavy and not of sufficient interest for our publication; and as I have a great many well on hand, I am forced to be particular. Originally my fear was lest we should not get contributors enough. That fear has long vanished. But *good* contributions are always scarce; so don't you fail me!

"We have been at Tunbridge Wells for a fortnight's holiday. I was forced to 'cave in,' as the Yankees say—regularly beat. I am not very flourishing now, but I can go into harness again Polly has been, and alas! still is, anything but in a satisfactory state. But she is gestating, and gestation with her is always perturbing. I wish the book were done with all my heart.

"I don't think I ever told you how very much your *History of Florence* interested me. I am shockingly ignorant of the subject, and not at all competent to speak, except as one of the public; but you made the political life of the people clear to me. I only regretted here and there a newspaper style which was not historic. Oscar Browning has sent me his review, but I have not read it yet. It is at the printer's. Polly sends her love.

"Ever faithfully yours,

"G. H. L."

He writes again, dating his letter 1st January, 1866, but post-marked 1865. It is singular, that the date as given by the writer, 1866, must have been right, and that given by the post-mark, 1865, wrong.

And the fact may possibly some day be useful to some counsel having to struggle against the evidence of a post-mark. The letter commences :—

"My dear Trollope,—A happy new year to you and Bice!

[It is quite impossible that Lewes could have so written, while my wife, Theodosia, so great a favourite with both him and his wife, and so constantly inquired for tenderly by them, was yet alive. I lost her on the 13th of April, 1865. It is certain therefore, that Lewes's letter was written in 1866, and not as the post-mark declares in 1865. After speaking of some literary business matters, the letter goes on :—]

"And when am I to receive those articles from you, which you projected? I suppose other work keeps you ever on the stretch. But so active a man must needs 'fulfil himself in many ways.'

"We have been ailing constantly without being ill, but our work gets on somehow or other. Polly is miserable over a new novel, and I am happy over the very hard work of a new edition of my *History of Philosophy*, which will almost be a new book, so great are the changes and additions. Polly sends her love to you and Bice.

"Yours very faithfully,

"G. H. Lewes."

Then after a long break, and after a new phase of my life had commenced, Lewes writes on

the 14th of January, 1869, from "21, North Bank":—

"DEAR T. T.,—We did not meet in Germany because our plans were altogether changed. We passed all the time in the Black Forest, and came home through the Oberland. I did write to Salzburg however, and perhaps the letter is still there; but there was nothing in it.

"You know how fond we are of you, and the pleasure it always gives us to get a glimpse of you. (Not that we have not also very pleasant associations with your wife,[1] but she is as yet stranger to us of course.) But we went away in search of complete repose. And in the Black Forest there was not a soul to speak to, and we liked it so much as to stay on there.

"We contemplate moving southwards in the spring, and if we go to Italy and come *near* Florence, we shall assuredly make a *détour* and come and see you. Polly wants to see Arezzo and Perugia. And I suppose we can still get a *vetturino* to take us that way to Rome? Don't want railways, if to be avoided. I don't think we can get away before March, for my researches are so absorbing, that, if health holds out, I must go on, if not, we shall pack up earlier. The worst of Lent is that one gets no theatres, and precisely because we never go to the theatre in London, we hugely enjoy it abroad. Yesterday we took the child of

[1] I had married my second wife on the 29th of October, 1866.

a friend of ours to a morning performance of the pantomime, and are utterly knocked up in consequence. Somehow or other abroad the theatre agrees with us. Polly sends the kindest remembrances to you and your wife. Whenever you want anything done in London, consider me an idle man.

"Ever yours faithfully,

"G. H. LEWES."

And on the 28th February, in the same year, accordingly he writes :—

"Touching our visit to Florence, you may be sure we could not lightly forego such a pleasure. We start to-morrow, and unless we are recalled by my mother's health, we calculate being with you about the end of March. But we shall give due warning of our arrival. We both look forward to this holiday, and 'languish for the purple seas;' though the high winds now howl a threat of anything but a pleasant crossing to Calais. *Che! Che!* One must pay for one's pleasure! With both of our warmest salutations to you and yours,

"Believe me, yours faithfully,

"G. H. LEWES."

The travellers must, however, have reached us some days before the end of March, for I have a letter to my wife from George Eliot, dated from

Naples on the 1st of April, 1869, after they had left us. She writes:—

"My dear Mrs. Trollope,—The kindness which induces you to shelter travellers will make you willing to hear something of their subsequent fate. And I am the more inclined to send you some news of ourselves because I have nothing dismal to tell. We bore our long journey better than we dared to expect, for the night was made short by sleep in our large coupé, and during the day we had no more than one headache between us. Mr. Lewes really looks better, and has lost his twinges. And though pleasure-seekers are notoriously the most aggrieved and howling inhabitants of the universe, we can allege nothing against our lot here but the persistent coldness of the wind, which is in dangerously sudden contrast with the warmth of the sunshine whenever one gets on the wrong side of a wall. This prevents us from undertaking any carriage expeditions, which is rather unfortunate, because such expeditions are among the chief charms of Naples. We have not been able to renew our old memories of that sort at all, except by a railway journey to Pompeii; and our days are spent in the museum and in the sunniest out-of-door spots. We have been twice to the San Carlo, which we were the more pleased to do, because when we were here before, that fine theatre was closed. The singing is so-so, and the tenor especially is gifted with limbs rather than with

voice or ear. But there is a baritone worth hearing, and a soprano, whom the Neapolitans delight to honour with hideous sounds of applause.

"We are longing for a soft wind, which will allow us to take the long drive to Baiœ during one of our remaining days here. At present we think of leaving for Rome on Sunday or Monday. But our departure will probably be determined by an answer from the landlord of the Hôtel de Minerva, to whom Mr. Lewes has written. We have very comfortable quarters here, out of the way of that English and American society, whose charms you can imagine. Our private dinner is well served; and I am glad to be away from the Chiaja, except—the exception is a great one—for the sake of the sunsets which I should have seen there.

"Mr. Lewes has found a book by an Italian named Franchi, formerly a priest, on the present condition of philosophy in Italy. He emerges from its depths—or shallows—to send his best remembrances; and to Bice he begs especially to recommend Plantation Bitters.

"I usually think all the more of things and places the farther I get from them, and, on that ground, you will understand that at Naples I think of Florence, and the kindness I found there under my small miseries. Pray offer my kind regards to Miss Blagden when you see her, and tell her that I hope to shake hands with her in London this spring.

"We shall obey Mr. Trollope's injunctions to write again from Perugia or elsewhere, according

to our route homeward. But pray warn him, that when my throat is not sore, and my head not stagnant, I am a much fiercer antagonist. It is perhaps a delight to one's egoism to have a friend who is among the best of men with the worst of theories. One can be at once affectionate and spit-fire. Pray remember me with indulgence, all of you, and believe, dear Mrs. Trollope,

"Most truly yours,

"M. E. LEWES."

It will be seen from the above that George Eliot had very quickly fraternised—what is the feminine form? —with my second wife, as I, without any misgivings, foresaw would be the case. Indeed subsequent circumstances allowed a greater degree of intimacy to grow up between them than had been possible in the case of my Bice's mother, restricted as her intercourse with the latter had been by failing health, and the comparative fewness of the hours they had passed together. Neither she nor Lewes had ever passed a night under my roof until I received them in the villa at Ricorboli, where I lived with my second wife.

What was the subject of the "antagonism" to which the above letter alludes, I have entirely forgotten. In all probability we differed on some subject of politics,[1] by reason of the then rapidly

[1] My wife, on reading this passage, tells me that according to her recollection the differences in question had no reference to politics at all, but to matters of higher interest relating to man's ultimate destinies.

maturing Conservatism which my outlook ahead forced upon me. Nevertheless it would seem from some words in a letter written to me by Lewes in the November of 1869, that my political heresies were not deemed deeply damning. There was a question of my undertaking the foreign correspondence of a London paper, which came to nothing till some four years later, under other circumstances; and with reference to that project he writes:—

"Polly and I were immensely pleased at the prospect for you. She was rejoiced that you should once more be giving yourself to public affairs, which you so well understand. . . . We are but just come back from the solitudes of a farm-house in Surrey, whither I took Polly immediately after our loss [of his son], of which I suppose Anthony told you. It had shaken her seriously. She had lavished almost a mother's love on the dear boy, and suffered a mother's grief in the bereavement. He died in her arms; and for a long while it seemed as if she could never get over the pain. But now she is calm again, though very sad. But she will get to work, and *that* will aid her.

"For me, I was as fully prepared (by three or four months' conviction of its inevitableness) as one can be in such cases. It is always sudden, however foreseen. Yet the preparation was of great use; and I now have only a beautiful image living with me, and a deep thankfulness that his sufferings are at an end, since recovery was impossible.

"Give my love to your wife and Bice, and believe ever in yours faithfully,

"G. H. LEWES."

The following highly interesting letter was written to my wife by Mrs. Lewes, about a year after his death. It is dated "The Priory, 19 December, 1879":—

"DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE,—In sending me Dr. Haller's words you have sent me a great comfort. A just appreciation of my husband's work from a competent person is what I am most athirst for; and Dr. Haller has put his finger on a true characteristic. I only wish he could print something to the same effect in any pages that would be generally read.

"There is no biography. An article entitled 'George Henry Lewes' appeared in the last *New London Quarterly*. It was written by a man for whom he had much esteem; but it is not strong. A few facts about the early life and education are given with tolerable accuracy, but the estimate of the philosophic and scientific activity is inadequate. Still it is the best thing you could mention to Dr. Haller. You know perhaps that a volume entitled *The Study of Psychology* appeared in May last, and that another volume (500 pp.) of *Problems of Life and Mind* has just been published. The best history of a writer is contained in his writings; these are his chief actions. If he happens to have

left an autobiography telling (what nobody else can tell) how his mind grew, how it was determined by the joys, sorrows, and other influences of childhood and youth—that is a precious contribution to knowledge. But biographies generally are a disease of English literature.

"I have never yet told you how grateful I was to you for writing to me a year ago. For a long while I could read no letter. But now I have read yours more than once, and it is carefully preserved. You had been with us in our happiness so near the time when it left me—you and your husband are peculiarly bound up with the latest memories.

"You must have had a mournful summer. But Mr. Trollope's thorough recovery from his severe attack is a fresh proof of his constitutional strength. We cannot properly count age by years. See what Mr. Gladstone does with seventy of them in his frame. And my lost one had but sixty-one and a half.

"You are to come to England again in 1881, I remember, and then, if I am alive, I hope to see you. With best love to you both, always, dear Mrs. Trollope,

"Yours faithfully,

"M. E. LEWES."

The "words of Dr. Haller," to which the above letter refers, were to the effect that one of Lewes's great advantages in scientific and philosophical research was his familiar acquaintance with the

works of German and French writers, which enabled him to follow the contemporaneous movement of science throughout Europe, whereas many writers of learning and ability wasted their own and their readers' time in investigating questions already fully investigated elsewhere, and advancing theories which had been previously proved or disproved without their knowledge. Dr. Ludwig Haller, of Berlin, in writing to me about G. H. Lewes, then recently deceased, had said, if I remember rightly, that he had some intention of publishing a sketch of Lewes in some German periodical. I am not aware whether this intention was ever carried into effect.

The attack to which the above letter alludes was a very bad one of sciatica. At length the baths of Baden in Switzerland cured me permanently, but after their—it is said ordinary and normal, but very perverse—fashion, having first made me incomparably worse. I suffered excruciatingly, consolingly (!) assured by the doctor that sciatica never kills—only makes you wish that it would! While I was at the worst my brother came to Baden to see me, and on leaving me after a couple of days, wrote to my wife the following letter, which I confiscated and keep as a memorial

After expressing his commiseration for me, he continues:—

"For you, I cannot tell you the admiration I have for you. Your affection and care and assiduity were to be expected. I knew you well enough to

take them as a matter of course from you to him. But your mental and physical capacity, your power of sustaining him by your own cheerfulness, and supporting him by your own attention, are marvellous. When I consider all the circumstances I hardly know how to reconcile so much love with so much self-control."

Every word true! And what he saw for a few hours in each of a couple of days, I saw every hour of the day and night for four terrible months!

But all this is a parenthesis into which I have been led, I hope excusably, by Mrs. Lewes's mention of my illness.

N.B.—I said at an early page of these recollections that I had never been confined to my bed by illness for a single day during more than sixty years. The above-mentioned illness leaves the statement still true. The sciatica was bad, but never kept me in bed. Indeed I was perhaps in less torment out of it.

Here is the last letter of George Eliot's which reached us. It is written by Mrs. Lewes to my wife, from "The Priory, 30 December, 1879":—

"DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE,—I inclose the best photograph within my reach. To me all portraits of him are objectionable, because I see him more vividly and truly without them. But I think this is the most like what he was as you knew him. I have sent your anecdote about the boy to Mr. Du Maurier, whom it will suit exactly. I asked

Charles Lewes to copy it from your letter with your own pretty words of introduction.

"Yours affectionately,

"M. E. LEWES."

It is pretty well too late in the day for me to lament the loss of old friends. They have been well-nigh some time past all gone. I have been exceptionally fortunate in an aftermath belonging to a younger generation. But they too are dropping around me! And few losses from this second crop have left a more regretted void than George Henry Lewes and his wife.

CHAPTER XVII.

I HAVE thought that it might be more convenient to the reader to have the letters contained in the foregoing chapter all together, and have not interrupted them therefore to speak of any of the events which were meantime happening in my own life.

But during the period which the letters cover the two greatest sorrows of my life had fallen upon me —I had lost first my mother, then my wife.

The bereavement, however, was very different in the two cases. If my mother had died a dozen years earlier I should have felt the loss as the end of all things to me—as leaving me desolate and causing a void which nothing could ever fill. But when she died at eighty-three she had lived her life, upon the whole a very happy one, to the happiness of which I had (and have) the satisfaction of believing I largely contributed.

It is very common for a mother and daughter to live during many years of life together in as close companionship as I lived with my mother, but it is not common for a son to do so. During many years, and many, many journeyings, and more

tête-à-tête walks, and yet more of *tête-à-tête* home hours, we were inseparable companions and friends. I can truly say that, from the time when we put our horses together on my return from Birmingham to the time of my marriage, she was all in all to me! During some four or five days in the early time of our residence at Florence I thought I was going to lose her, and I can never forget the blank wretchedness of the prospect that seemed to be before me.

She had a very serious illness, and was, as I had subsequently reason to believe, very mistakenly treated. She was attended by a practitioner of the old school, who had at that time the leading practice in Florence. He was a very good fellow, and an admirable whist player; and I do not think the members of our little colony drew a sufficiently sharp line of division between his social and his professional qualifications. He was, as I have said, essentially a man of the (even then) old school, and retained the old-fashioned general practitioner's phraseology. I remember his once mortally disgusting an unhappy dyspeptic old lady by asking her, "Do we go to our dinner with glee?" As if the poor soul had ever done anything with glee!

This gentleman had bled my mother, and had appointed another bleeding for the evening. I believe she would assuredly have died if that had been done, and I attribute to Lord Holland the saving of her. Her doctor had very wrongly resisted the calling in of other English advice,

professional jealousy, and indeed enmity, running high just then among us. Lord Holland came to the house just in the nick of time; and overruling authoritatively all the difficulties raised by the Esculapius in possession of the field, insisted on at once sending his own medical attendant. The result was the immediate administration of port wine instead of phlebotomy, and the patient's rapid recovery.

My mother was at the time far past taking any part in the discussion of the medical measures to be adopted in her case. But I am not without a suspicion that she too, if she could have been consulted, would have sided with phlebotomy and whist, as against modern practice unrelieved by any such alleviation. For the phlebotomist had been a constant attendant at her Friday night whist-table; and as it was she lost him, for he naturally was offended at her recovery under rival hands.

What my mother *was* I have already said enough to show, as far as my imperfect words can show it, in divers passages of these reminiscences. She was the happiest natured person I ever knew—happy in the intense power of enjoyment, happier still in the conscious exercise of the power of making others happy; and this continued to be the case till nearly the end. During the last few years the bright lamp began to grow dim and gradually sink into the socket. She suffered but little physically, but she lost her memory, and then

gradually more and more the powers of her mind generally. I have often thought that this perishing of the mind before the exceptionally healthy and well-constituted physical frame, in which it was housed, may have been due to the tremendous strain to which she was subjected during those terrible months at Bruges, when she was watching the dying bed of a much-loved son during the day, and, dieted on green tea and laudanum, was writing fiction most part of the night. The cause, if such were the case, would have preceded the effect by some forty years; but whether it is on the cards to suppose that such an effect may have been produced after such a length of time, I have not physiological knowledge enough to tell.

She was, I think, to an exceptional degree surrounded by very many friends, mostly women, but including many men, at every period of her life. But the circumstances of it caused the world of her intimates during her youth, her middle life, and her old age, to be to a great degree peopled by different figures.

She was during all her life full of, and fond of, fun; had an exquisite sense of humour; and at all times valued her friends and acquaintances more exclusively, I think, than most people do, for their intrinsic qualities, mainly those of heart, and, not so much perhaps intellect, accurately speaking, as brightness. There is a passage in my brother's *Autobiography* which grates upon my mind, and, I think, very signally fails to hit the mark.

He writes (vol. i. p. 28):—"She loved society, affecting a somewhat Liberal *rôle*, and professing an emotional dislike to tyrants, which sprung from the wrongs of would-be regicides and the poverty of patriot exiles. An Italian marquis who had escaped with only a second shirt from the clutches of some archduke whom he had wished to exterminate, or a French *prolétaire* with distant ideas of sacrificing himself to the cause of liberty, were always welcome to the modest hospitality of her house. In after years, when marquises of another caste had been gracious to her, she became a strong Tory, and thought that archduchesses were sweet. But with her, politics were always an affair of the heart, as indeed were all her convictions. Of reasoning from causes I think that she knew nothing."

Now there is hardly a word of this in which Anthony is not more or less mistaken; and that simply because he had not adequate opportunities for close observation. The affection which subsisted between my mother and my brother Anthony was from the beginning to the end of their lives as tender and as warm as ever existed between a mother and son. Indeed I remember that in the old days of our youth we used to consider Anthony the Benjamin. But from the time that he became a clerk in the Post Office to her death, he and my mother were never together but as visitors during the limited period of a visit. From the time that I resigned my position at Birmingham

to the time of her death, I was uninterruptedly an inmate of her house, or she of mine. And I think that I knew her, as few sons know their mothers.

No regicide, would-be or other, ever darkened her doors. No French *prolétaire*, or other French political refugee was ever among her guests. She never was acquainted with any Italian marquis who had escaped in any degree of distress from poverty. With General Pepe she was intimate for years. But of him the world knows enough to perceive that my brother cannot have alluded to him. And I recollect no other marquis. It is very true that in the old Keppel Street and Harrow days several Italian exiles, and I think some Spaniards, used to be her occasional guests. This had come to pass by means of her intimacy with Lady Dyer, the wife and subsequently widow of Sir Thomas Dyer, whose years of foreign service had interested him and her in many such persons. The friends of her friend were her friends. They were not such by virtue of their political position and ideas. Though it is no doubt true, that caring little about politics, and in a jesting way (how jesting many a memorial of fun between her and Lady Dyer, and Miss Gabell, the daughter of Dr. Gabell of Winchester, is still extant in my hands to prove;) the general tone of the house was "Liberal." But nothing can be farther from the truth than the idea that my mother was led to become a Tory by the "graciousness" of any

"marquises" or great folks of any kind. I am inclined to think that there was *one* great personage, whose (not graciousness, but) intellectual influence *did* impel her mind in a Conservative direction. And this was Metternich. She had more talk with him than her book on Vienna would lead a reader to suppose; and very far more of his mind and influence reached her through the medium of the Princess.

To how great a degree this is likely to have been the case may be in some measure perceived from a letter which the Princess addressed to my mother shortly after she had left Vienna. She preserved it among a few others, which she specially valued, and I transcribe it from the original now before me.

"Vous ne pourriez croire, chère Madame Trollope, combien le portrait que vous avez chargé le Baron Hügel de me remettre m'a fait de plaisir!

"Il y a longtemps que je cachais au fonds de mon cœur le désir de posséder votre portrait, qui, interressant pour le monde, est devenu précieux pour moi, puisque j'ai le plaisir de vous connaitre telle que vous êtes, bonne, simple, bienveillante, et loin de tout ce qui effroie et eloigne des reputations litéraires. Je remercie M. Hervieu de l'avoir fait aussi ressemblant. Et je vous assure, chère Madame Trollope, que rien ne pouvait me toucher aussi vivement et me faire autant de plaisir que ce souvenir venant de vous, qui me rappelera sans cesse les bons moments que j'ai eu la satis-

faction de passer avec vous et qui resteront à jamais chères à ma mémoire.

"MELANIE, PRINCESSE DE METTERNICH."

I think that the hours passed by the Princess and my mother *tête-à-tête*, save for the presence of the artist occupied by his work during the painting of the Princess Melanie's portrait for my mother, were mainly the cause of the real intimacy of mind and affection which grew up between them—though, of course, the painting of the portrait shows that a considerable intimacy had previously arisen. And it had been arranged that the portrait of my mother, which was the occasion of the above letter, should be exchanged for that of the Princess. But there had been no time amid the whirl of the Vienna gaieties to get it executed. It was, therefore, sent from England by Baron Hügel when he called on my mother, on visiting this country shortly after her return from Austria.

It occurs to me here to mention a circumstance which was, I think, the first thing to begin—not the acquaintance but—the intimacy in question; and which may be related as possessing an interest not confined to either of the ladies in question.

The Archduchess Sophie had graciously intimated her desire that my mother should be presented to her, and an evening had been named for the purpose. But a few days before—just three, if I remember rightly—my mother caught a cold, which resulted in erysipelas, causing her head to

become swollen to nearly double its usual size! Great was the dismay of the ladies who had arranged the meeting with the Archduchess, chief among whom had been the Princess Melanie. She came to my mother, and insisted upon sending to her an old homœopathic physician, who was her own medical attendant, and had been Hahnemann's favourite pupil. He came, saw his patient, and was told that what he had to do was to make her presentable by the following Friday! He shook his head, said the time was too short—but he would do his best. And the desired object was *fully* attained.

I have no doubt that my mother returned from her Vienna visit a more strongly convinced Conservative in politics than she had hitherto been. And it does not seem to me that the modification of her opinions in that direction, which was doubtless largely operated by conversation with the great Conservative statesman and his *alter ego*, the Princess, needs to be in any degree attributed to the "graciousness" of people in high position either male or female. Is it not very intelligible and very likely that such opinions, so set forth, as she from day to day heard them, should have honestly and legitimately influenced her own?

But I think that I should be speaking, if perhaps presumptuously, yet truly, if I were to add that there was also one very far from great personage, whose influence in the same direction was greater than even that of Prince Metternich or of any other great folks

whatever; and that was the son in daily and almost hourly communion and conversation with whom she lived. I also had begun life as a "Liberal," and was such in the days when Mr. Gladstone was a high Tory. But my mind had long been travelling in an inverse direction to his. And far too large a number of my contemporaries distinguished and undistinguished have been moving in the same direction for it to be at all necessary to say that most assuredly my slowly maturing convictions were neither generated nor fostered by any "graciousness" or other influence of dukes or duchesses or great people of any sort.

That my mother's political ideas were in no degree "an affair of the heart," I will not say, and by no means regret not being able to say. But I cannot but assert that it is a great mistake to say that they were uninfluenced by "reasoning from causes," or that the movement of her mind in this respect was in any degree whatever due to the caresses which my brother imagines to have caused it.

She was not a great or careful preserver of papers and letters, or I might have been able to print here very many communications from persons in whom the world feels an interest. Among her early and very dear friends was Mary Mitford.

I have a very vivid remembrance of the appearance of Mary Russell Mitford as I used to see her on the occasions of my visits to Reading, where my grandfather's second wife and then widow was

residing. She was not corpulent, but her figure gave one the idea of almost cubical solidity. She had a round and red full moon sort of face, from the ample forehead above which the hair was all dragged back and stowed away under a small and close-fitting cap, which surrounding her face increased the effect of full-blown rotundity. But the grey eye and even the little snub nose were full of drollery and humour, and the lines about the generally somewhat closely shut mouth indicated unmistakable intellectual power. There is a singular resemblance between her handwriting and that of my mother. Very numerous letters must have passed between them. But of all these I have been able to find but four.

On the 3rd of April, 1832, she writes from the "Three Mile Cross," so familiar to many readers, as follows:—

"My dear Mrs. Trollope,—I thank you most sincerely for your very delightful book, as well as for its great kindness towards me; and I wish you joy from the bottom of my heart of the splendid success which has not merely attended but awaited its career—a happy and I trust certain augury of your literary good fortune in every line which you may pursue. I assure you that my political prejudices are by no means shocked at your dislike of Republicanism. I was always a very aristocratic Whig, and since these reforming days am well-nigh become a staunch Tory, for pretty nearly the same reason that converted you—a dislike to mobs in

action. . . . Refinement follows wealth, but not often closely, as witness the parvenu people even in dear England. . . . I heard of your plunge into the Backwoods first from Mr. Owen himself, with whom I foregathered three years ago in London, and of whom you have given so very true and graphic a picture. What extraordinary mildness and plausibility that man possesses! I never before saw an instance of actual wildness—madness of theory accompanied by such suavity and soberness of manner. Did you see my friend, Miss Sedgwick? Her letters show a large and amiable mind, and a little niece of nine years old, who generally writes in them, has a style very unusual in so young a girl, and yet most youthful and natural too. . . . Can you tell me if Mr. Flint be the author of *George Mason, or the Young Backwoodsman?* I think that he is; and whether the name of a young satirical writer be Sams or Sands? Your answering these questions will stead me much, and I am sure that you will answer them if you can.

"Now to your kind questions. I am getting ready a fifth and last volume of *Our Village* as fast as I can, though with pain and difficulty, having hurt my left hand so much by a fall from an open carriage that it affects the right, and makes writing very uncomfortable to me. And I am in a most perplexed state about my opera, not knowing whether it will be produced this season or not, in consequence of Captain Polhill and his singers having parted. This would not have happened had

my coadjutor the composer kept to his time. And I have still hopes that when the opera be [shall, omitted probably] taken in (the music is even now not finished), a sense of interest will bring the parties together again. I hope that it may, for it will not only be a tremendous hit for all of us, but it will take me to London and give me the pleasure of a peep at you, a happiness to which I look forward very anxiously. I know Mr. Tom, and like him of all things, as everybody who knows him must, and I hear that his sisters are charming. God bless you, my dear friend. My father joins me in every good wish, and

"I am ever most affectionately yours,

"M. R. MITFORD."

A few weeks later she writes a very long letter almost entirely filled with a discussion of the desirability or non-desirability of writing in this, that, and the other "annual" or magazine. Most of those she alludes to are dead, and there is no interest in preserving her mainly unfavourable remarks concerning them and their editors and publishers. One sentence, however, is so singularly and amusingly suggestive of change in men and women and things, that I must give it. After reviewing a great number of the leading monthlies she says "as for Fraser's and Blackwood's, they are hardly such as a lady likes to write for"!

After advising my mother to stick to writing novels, she says, "I have not a doubt that that is by far the

most profitable branch of the literary profession. If ever I be bold enough to try that arduous path, I shall endeavour to come as near as I can to Miss Austen, my idol. You are very good about my opera. I am sorry to tell you, and you will be sorry to hear, that the composer has disappointed me, that the music is not even yet ready, and that the piece is therefore necessarily delayed till next season. I am very sorry for this on account of the money, and because I have many friends in and near town, yourself amongst the rest, whom I was desirous to see. But I suppose it will be for the good of the opera to wait till the beginning of a season. It is to be produced with extraordinary splendour, and will, I think, be a tremendous hit. I hope also to have a tragedy out at nearly the same time in the autumn, and *then* I trust we shall meet, and I shall see your dear girls.

"How glad I am to find that you partake of my great aversion to the sort of puffery belonging to literature. I hate it! and always did, and love you all the better for partaking of my feeling on the subject. I believe that with me it is pride that revolts at the trash. And then it is so false; the people are so clearly flattering to be flattered. Oh, I hate it!!!

"Make my kindest regards [*sic*] and accept my father's.

"Ever most faithfully and affectionately yours,

"M. R. MITFORD.

"P.S.—I suppose my book will be out in about

a month. I shall desire Whittaker to send you a copy. It is the fifth and last volume."

The following interesting letter, franked by her friend Talfourd, and shown only by the post-mark to have been posted on the 20th of June, 1836, is apparently only part of a letter, for it is written upon one page, and the two "turnovers" only; and begins abruptly:—

"My being in London this year seems very uncertain, although if Mr. Sergeant Talfourd's *Ion* be played, as I believe it will, for Mr. Macready's benefit, I shall hardly be able to resist the temptation of going up for a very few days to be present upon that occasion. But I scarcely ever stir. I am not strong, and am subject to a painful complaint, which renders the service of a maid indispensable not only to my comfort but to my health; and that, besides the expense, has an appearance of fuss and finery, to which I have a great objection, and to which indeed I have from station no claim. My father, too, hates to be left even for a day. And splendid old man as he is in his healthful and vigorous age, I cannot but recollect that he is seventy-five, and that he is my only tie upon earth —the only relation (except, indeed, a few very distant cousins, Russells, Greys, Ogles, and Deans, whom I am too proud and too poor to hook on upon), my only relation in the wide world. This is a desolate view of things; but it explains a degree of clinging to that one most precious

parent which people can hardly comprehend. You can scarcely imagine how fine an old man he is; how clear of head and warm of heart. He almost wept over your letter to-day, and reads your book with singular delight and satisfaction, in spite of the difference in politics. He feels strongly, and so, I assure you, do I, your kind mention of me and my poor writings—a sort of testimony always gratifying, but doubly so when the distinguished writer is a dear friend. Even in this desolation, your success —that of your last work [*Paris and the Parisians*] especially must be satisfactory to you. I have no doubt that two volumes on Italy will prove equally delightful to your readers, whilst the journey will be the best possible remedy for all that you have suffered in spirits and health.

"I am attempting a novel, for which Messieurs Saunders and Ottley have agreed to give 700*l.* It is to be ready some time in September—I mean the MS.—and I am most anxious upon every account to make it as good as possible, one very great reason being the fair, candid, and liberal conduct of the intended publishers. I shall do my very best. Shall I, do you think, succeed? I take for granted that our loss is your gain, and that you see Mr. Milman and his charming wife, who will, I am sure, sympathise most sincerely in your present[1] affliction.

[1] Mr. Milman had resigned recently the incumbency of a parish in Reading. My mother's affliction alluded to was the death of her youngest daughter, Emily.

"Adieu, my dear friend. I am tying myself up from letter-writing until I have finished my novel. While I cannot but hope for one line from you to say that you are recovering. Letters to me may always be inclosed to Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, M.P., 2, Elm Court, Temple. Even if he be on circuit, they will reach me after a short delay. God bless you all. My father joins heartily in this prayer, with

"Your faithful and affectionate,

"M. R. MITFORD."

The next, and last which I have found, is entirely undated, but post-marked 20th April, 1837.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I don't know when a trifle has pleased me so much as the coincidence which set us a-writing to each other just at the same time. I have all the north-country superstition flowing through my veins, and do really believe in the exploded doctrine of sympathies. That is to say, I believe in all *genial* superstitions, and don't like this steam-packet railway world of ours, which puts aside with so much scorn that which for certain Shakespeare and Ben Jonson held for true. I am charmed at your own account of yourself and your doings. Mr. Edward Kenyon—(whose brother, John Kenyon, of Harley Place, the most delightful man in London—of course you know him—is my especial friend)—Mr. Edward Kenyon, who lives chiefly at

Vienna, although, I believe, in great retirement, spending 200*l.* upon himself, and giving away 2,000*l.*—Mr. Edward Kenyon spoke of you to me as having such opportunities of knowing both the city and the country as rarely befell even a resident, and what you say of the peasantry gives me a strong desire to see your book.

"A happy subject is in my mind, a great thing, especially for you whose descriptions are so graphic. The thing that would interest me in Austria, and for the maintenance of which one almost pardons (not quite) their retaining that other old-fashioned thing, the State prisons, is their having kept up in their splendour those grand old monasteries, which are swept away now in Spain and Portugal. I have a passion for Gothic architecture, and a leaning towards the magnificence of the old religion, the foster-mother of all that is finest and highest in art, and if I have such a thing as a literary project, it is to write a romance, of which Reading Abbey in its primal magnificence should form a part, not the least about forms of faith, understand, but as an element of the picturesque, and as embodying a very grand and influential part of bygone days. At present I have just finished (since writing *Country Stories*, which people seem so good as to like) writing all the prose (except one story about the fashionable subject of Egyptian magicians, furnished to me by your admirer, Henry Chorley; I wish you had seen him taking off his hat to the walls as I showed him your father's old residence

at Heckfield), all the prose of the most splendid of the annuals, Finden's *Tableaux*, of which my longest and best story—a Young Pretender story—I have been obliged to omit in consequence of not calculating on the length of my poetical contributors. But my poetry, especially that by that wonderful young creature Miss Barrett, Mr. Kenyon, and Mr. Procter, is certainly such as has seldom before been seen in an annual, and joined with Finden's magnificent engravings ought to make an attractive work.

"I am now going to my novel, if it please God to grant me health. For the last two months I have only once crossed the outer threshold, and, indeed, I have never been a day well since the united effects of the tragedy and the influenza . . . [word destroyed by the seal]. What will become of that poor play is in the womb of time. But its being by universal admission a far more striking drama than *Rienzi*, and by very far the best thing I ever wrote, it follows almost of course, that it will share the fate of its predecessor, and be tossed about the theatres for three or four years to come. Of course I should be only too happy that it should be brought out at Covent Garden under the united auspices of Mr. Macready and Mr. Bartley.[1] But I am in constitution and in feeling a much older person than you, my dear friend, as well as in look,

[1] This gentleman was an old and highly valued friend of my mother.

however the acknowledgment of age (I am 48) may stand between us; and belonging to a most sanguine and confiding person, I am of course as prone to anticipate all probable evil as he is to forestall impossible good. He, my dear father, is, I thank Heaven, splendidly well. He speaks of you always with much delight, is charmed with your writings, and I do hope that you will come to Reading and give him as well as me the great pleasure of seeing you at our poor cottage by the roadside. You would like my flower-garden. It is really a flower-garden becoming a duchess. People are so good in ministering to this, my only amusement. And the effect is heightened by passing through a labourer's cottage to get at it, for such our poor hut literally is.

"You have heard, I suppose, that Mr. Wordsworth's eldest son, who married a daughter of Mr. Curwen, has lost nearly, if not quite, all of his wife's portion by the sea flowing in upon the mine, and has now nothing left but a living of 200*l.* given him by his father-in-law. So are we all touched in turn.

"I have written to the Sedgwicks for the scarlet lilies mentioned by Miss Martineau in her American book. Did you happen to see them in their glory? of course they would flourish here; and having sent them primroses, cowslips, ivy, and many other English wild flowers, which took Theodore Sedgwick's fancy, I have a right to the return. How glad I am to hear the good you tell me of my

friend Tom. His fortune seems now assured. My father's kindest regards.

"Ever my dear friend,

"Very faithfully yours,

"M. R. MITFORD.

"P.S.—Mr. Carey, the translator of Dante, has just been here. He says that he visited Cowper's residence at Olney lately, and that his garden room, which suggested mine, is incredibly small, and not near so pretty. Come and see. You know, of course, that the 'Modern Antiques' in *Our Village* were Theodosia and Frances Hill, sisters of Joseph Hill, cousins and friends of poor Cowper."

What the "good" was by which my "fortune was assured" I am unable to guess. But I am sure of the sincerity of the writer's rejoicing thereat.

Mary Mitford was a genuinely warm-hearted woman, and much of her talk would probably be stigmatised by the young gentlemen of the present generation, who consider the moral temperature of a fish to be "good form," as "gush." How old Landor, who "gushed" from cradle to grave, would have massacred and rended in his wrath such talkers! Mary Mitford's "gush" was sincere at all events. But there is a "hall-mark," for those who can decipher it, "without which none is genuine."

A considerable intimacy grew up between my mother and the author of *Highways and Byeways* during the latter part of his residence in England, and subsequently, when returning from Boston on

leave, he visited Florence and Rome. Many letters passed between them after his establishment as British Consul at Boston, some characteristic selections from which will, I doubt not, be acceptable to many readers.

The following was written on the envelope enclosing a very long letter from Mrs. Grattan, and was written, I think, in 1840 :—

"I cannot avoid squeezing in a few words more just as the ship is on the point of sailing or steaming away for England. . . . 'The President' has been a fatal title this spring. Poor Harrison, a good and honest man, died in a month after he was elected, and this fine ship, about which we have been at this side of the Atlantic so painfully excited ever since March, is, I fear, gone down with its gallant captain (Roberts, with whom we crossed the Atlantic in the *British Queen*) and poor Power, whom the public cannot afford to lose.

"Since I wrote my letter three days ago—pardon the boldly original topic—the weather has mended considerably. Tell Tom that every tree is also striving to turn over a new leaf, and it is well for you that I have not another to turn too. God bless you. "T. C. G."

I beg to observe that the exhortation addressed to me had no moral significance, but was the writer's characteristic mode of exciting me to new scribblements.

The following, also written on the envelope

enclosing a letter from Mrs. Grattan, is dated the 30th of July, 1840:—

"I cannot let the envelope go quite a blank, though I cannot quite make it a prize. . . . In literature I have done nothing but write a preface and notes for two new editions of the old *Highways and Byeways*, and a short sketchy article in this month's number of the *North American Review* on the present state of Ireland. I am going to follow it up in the next number in reference to the state of the Irish in America, and I hope I shall thus do some good to a subject I have much at heart. I have had various applications to deliver lectures at Lyceums, &c., and to preside at public meetings for various objects. All this I have declined. I have been very much before the public at dinners for various purposes, and have refused many invitations to several neighbouring cities. I must now draw back a little. I think I have hitherto done good to the cause of peace and friendship between the countries. But I know these continued public appearances will expose me to envy, hatred, and malice. I hope to do something historical by and by, and perhaps an occasional article in the *North American Review*. But anything like light writing I never can again turn to."

From a very long letter written on the 13th of May, 1841, I will give a few extracts:—

"My dear and valued Friend,—Your letter from Penryth [*sic*], without date, but bearing the

ominous post-mark, 'April 1st,' has completely made a fool of me, in that sense which implies that nothing else can excuse a grey head and a seared heart for thinking and feeling that there are such things in the world as affection and sincerity. Being fond of flying in the face of reason, and despising experience, whenever they lay down general rules, I am resolved to believe in exceptions, to delight in instances, and to be quite satisfied that I have 'troops of friends'—you being one of the troopers—no matter how few others there may be, or where they are to be found.

"You really must imagine how glad we were to see your handwriting again, and I may say also, how surprised; for it passeth our understanding to discover how you *make* time for any correspondence at all. We have followed all your literary doings step by step since we left Europe, and we never cease wondering at your fertility and rejoicing at your success. But I am grieved to think that all this is at the cost of your comfort. Or is it that you wrote in a querulous mood, when you said those sharp things about your grey goose quill. Surely composition must be pleasant to you. No one who writes so fast and so well can find it actually irksome. I am aware that people sometimes think they find it so. But we may deceive ourselves on the dark as well as on the bright side of our road, and more easily, because it *is* the dark. That is to say, we may not only cheat ourselves with false hopes of good, but with false notions of evil, which

proves, if it proves anything just now, that you are considerably mistaken when you fancy writing to be a bore, and that I know infinitely better than you do what you like or dislike."

It is rather singular to find a literary *workman* talking in this style. Grattan was not a fertile writer, and, I must suppose, was never a very industrious one. But he surely must have known that talk about the pleasures of "composition" was wholly beside the mark. *That* may be, often is, pleasant enough, and if the thoughts could be telephoned from the brain to the types it would all be mighty agreeable; and the world would be very considerably more overwhelmed with authorship than it is. It is the "grey goose quill" work, the necessity for incarnating the creatures of the brain in black and white, that is the world's protection from this avalanche. And I for one do not understand how anybody who, eschewing the sunshine and the fields and the song of birds, or the enjoyment of other people's brain-work, has glued himself to his desk for long hours, can say or imagine that his task is, or has been, aught else than hard and distasteful work, demanding unrelaxing self-denial and industry. And however fine the frenzy in which the poet's eye may roll while he builds the lofty line, the work of putting some thousands of them on the paper when built must be as irksome to him as the penny-a-liner's task is to *him*—more so, in that the mind of the latter does not need to be forcibly and painfully restrained from rushing on to

the new pastures which invite it, and curbed to the pack-horse pace of the quill-driving process.

"You must not," he continues, "allow yourself to be, or even to fancy that you are tired or tormented, or worn out. Work the mine to the last. Pump up every drop out of the well. Put money i' thy purse; and add story after story to that structure of fame, which will enable you to do as much to that house by the lake side, where I *will* hope to see you yet."

He then goes on to speak at considerable length of the society of Boston, praising it much, yet saying that it is made more charming to a visitor than to a permanent resident. "In this it differs," he says, "from almost all the countries I have lived in in Europe, except Holland."

Speaking of a visit to Washington during the inauguration of General Harrison, which seems to have delighted him much, he says he travelled back with a family, "at least with the master and mistress of it, of whom I must tell you something. Mr. Paige is a merchant, and brother-in-law of Mr. Webster; Mrs. Paige a niece of Judge Story. From this double connection with two of the first men in the country their family associations are particularly agreeable. Mrs. Paige is one of three sisters, all very handsome, spirited, and full of talent. One is married to Mr. Webster's eldest son. Another, Mrs. Joy, has for her husband an idle gentleman, a rare thing in this place. Mrs. Paige was in Europe two years ago with Mr. and

Mrs. Webster senior (the latter by the bye is a *most* charming person) and had the advantage of seeing society in England and France in its best aspect, and is one who can compare as well as see. . . . Among the men [of the Boston society] are Dr. Channing, a prophet in our country, a pamphleteer in his own; Bancroft, *the* historian of America, a man of superior talents and great agreeability, but a black sheep in society, on account of his Van Buren politics, against whom the white sheep of the Whig party will not rub themselves; Prescott, the author of *Ferdinand and Isabella*, a handsome, half blind shunner of the vanities of the world, with some others, who read and write a good deal, and no one the wiser for it. Edward Everett is in Italy, where you will surely meet him [we saw a good deal of him]. He is rather formal than cold, if all I hear whispered of him be true; of elegant taste in literature, though not of easy manners, and altogether an admirable specimen of an American orator and scholar. At Cambridge, three miles off, we have Judge Story, of the Supreme Court, eloquent, deeply learned, garrulous, lively, amiable, excellent in all and every way that a mortal can be. He is decidedly the gem of this western world. Mr. Webster is now settled at Washington, though here at this moment on a visit to Mrs. Paige. Among our neighbouring notabilities is John Quincy Adams, an ex-President of the United States, ex-Minister at half the courts in Europe, and now at seventy-five, a simple

Member of Congress, hard as a piece of granite, and cold as a lump of ice."

Speaking of his having very frequently appeared at public meetings during the first year of his Consulship, and of his having since that refrained from such appearances, he continues: "I was doubtful as to the way my being so much *en evidence* might be relished *at home.* Of late public matters have been on so ticklish a footing, that all the less a British functionary was seen the better.

"In literature I have done nothing barring a couple of articles on Ireland and the Irish in America, a subject I have much at heart. But much as I feel for them and with them, I refused dining with my countrymen on St. Patrick's Day because they had the *gaucherie* (of which I had previous notice), to turn the festive meeting into a political one, by giving 'O'Connell and success to repeal' as one of their 'regular' toasts, and by leaving out the Queen's health, which they gave when I dined with them last year."

Then after detailed notices of the movements of his sons, he goes on:

"We have many plans in perspective, Niagara, Canada, Halifax, the mountains, the springs, the sea; the result of which you shall know as soon as we receive a true and faithful account of your adventures in just as many pages as you can afford; but Tom must in the meantime send me a long letter. . . . Tell Tom I have half resolved to give up punning and take to repartee. A young fellow

said to me the other day, 'Ah! Mr. Consul (as I am always called), I wish I could discover a new pleasure.' 'Try virtue!' was my reply. A pompous ex-Governor said swaggeringly to me at the last dinner party at which I assisted, 'Well, Mr. Consul, I suppose you Europeans think us semi-civilised here in America?' 'Almost!' said I. Now ask Tom if that was not pretty considerable smart. But assure him at the same time, it is nothing at all to what I *could* do in the way of impertinence! Need I say how truly and affectionately we all love you?

"T. C. GRATTAN."

I wrote back that I would enter the lists with him in the matter of impertinence; and as a sample told him that I thought he had better return to the punning.

I could, I doubt not, find among my mother's papers some further letters that might be worth printing or quoting. But my waning space warns me that I must not indulge myself with doing so.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I SAID at the beginning of the last chapter, that during the period, some of the recollections of which I had been chronicling, the two greatest sorrows I had ever known had befallen me. A third came subsequently. But that belonged to a period of my life which does not fall within the limits I have assigned to these reminiscences. Of the first, the death of my mother, I have spoken. The other, the death of my wife, followed it at no great distance, and was of course a far more terrible one. She had been ailing—so long indeed that I had become habituated to it, and thought that she would continue to live as she had been living. We had been travelling in Switzerland, in the autumn of 1864; and I remember very vividly her saying on board the steamer, by which we were leaving Colico at the head of the Lake of Como, on our return to Italy, as she turned on the deck to take a last look at the mountains, "Good-bye, you big beauties!" I little thought it was her last adieu to them; but I thought afterwards that she probably may have had some misgiving that it was so.

But it was not till the following spring that I began to realise that I must lose her. She died on the 13th of April, 1865.

I have spoken of her as she was when she became my wife, but without much hope of representing her to those who never had the happiness of knowing her, as she really was, not only in person, which matters little, but in mind and intellectual powers. And to tell what she was in heart, in disposition—in a word, in soul—would be a far more difficult task.

In her the æsthetic faculties were probably the most markedly exceptional portion of her intellectual constitution. The often cited dictum, *les races se feminisent* was not exemplified in her case. From her mother, an accomplished musician, she inherited her very pronounced musical [1] faculty and tendencies, and, I think, little else. From her father, a man of very varied capacities and culture, she drew much more. How far, if in any degree, this fact may be supposed to have been connected in the relation of cause and effect, with the other fact that her mother was more than fifty years of age at the time of her birth, I leave to the speculations of physiological inquirers. In bodily constitution her inheritance from her father's mother was most marked. To that source must be traced, I conceive, the delicacy of constitution, speaking medically, which deprived

[1] But this she might also have got from her father, who was passionately fond of music, and was a very respectable performer on the violin.

me of her at a comparatively early age; for both father and mother were of thoroughly healthy and strong constitutions. But if it may be suspected that the Brahmin Sultana, her grandmother, bequeathed her her frail diathesis, there was no doubt or difficulty in tracing to that source the exterior delicacy of formation which characterised her. I remember her telling me that the last words a dying sister of her mother's ever spoke, when Theodosia standing by the bedside placed her hand on the dying woman's forehead were, "Ah, that is Theo's little Indian hand." And truly the slender delicacy of hand and foot, which characterised her, were unmistakably due to her Indian descent. In person she in nowise resembled either father or mother, unless it were possibly her father in the conformation and shape of the teeth.

I have already in a previous chapter of these reminiscences given a letter from Mrs. Browning in which she speaks of Theodosia's "multiform faculty." And the phrase, which so occurring, might in the case of almost any other writer be taken as a mere epistolary civility, is in the case of one whose absolute accuracy of veracity never swerved a hair's-breadth, equivalent to a formal certificate of the fact to the best of her knowledge. And she knew my wife well both before and after the marriage of either of them. Her faculty was truly *multiform.*

She was not a great musician; but her singing had for great musicians a charm which the performances of many of their equals in the art failed

to afford them. She had never much voice, but I have rarely seen the hearer to whose eyes she could not bring the tears. She had a spell for awakening emotional sympathy which I have never seen surpassed, rarely indeed equalled.

For language she had an especial talent, was dainty in the use of her own, and astonishingly apt in acquiring—not merely the use for speaking as well as reading purposes, but—the delicacies of other tongues. Of Italian, with which she was naturally *most* conversant, she was recognised by acknowledged experts to be a thoroughly competent critic.

She published, now many years ago, in the *Athenæum*, some translations from the satirist Giusti, which any intelligent reader would, I think, recognise to be cleverly done. But none save the very few in this country, who know and can understand the Tuscan poet's works in the original, can at all conceive the difficulty of translating him into tolerable English verse. And I have no hesitation in asserting, that any competent judge, who is such by virtue of understanding the original, would pronounce her translations of Giusti to be a masterpiece, which very few indeed of contemporary men or women could have produced. I have more than once surprised her in tears occasioned by her obstinate struggles with some passage of the intensely idiomatic satirist, which she found it almost—but eventually not quite—impossible to render to her satisfaction.

She published a translation of Niccolini's *Arnaldo*

da Brescia, which won the cordial admiration and friendship of that great poet. And neither Niccolini's admiration nor his friendship were easily won. He was, when we knew him at Florence in his old age, a somewhat crabbed old man, not at all disposed to make new acquaintances, and, I think, somewhat soured and disappointed, not certainly with the meed of admiration he had won from his countrymen as a poet, but with the amount of effect which his writings had availed to produce in the political sentiments and then apparent destinies of the Italians. But he was conquered by the young Englishwoman's translation of his favourite, and, I think, his finest work. It is a thoroughly trustworthy and excellent translation; but the execution of it was child's play in comparison with the translations from Giusti.

She translated a number of the curiously characteristic *stornelli* of Tuscany, and especially of the Pistoja mountains. And here again it is impossible to make any one, who has never been familiar with these *stornelli* understand the especial difficulty of translating them. Of course the task was a slighter and less significant one than that of translating Giusti, nor was the same degree of critical accuracy and nicety in rendering shades of meaning called for. But there were not—are not—many persons who could cope with the especial difficulties of the attempt as successfully as she did. She produced also a number of pen-and-ink drawings illustrating these *stornelli*, which I still possess, and in which

the spirited, graphic, and accurately truthful characterisation of the figures could only have been achieved by an artist very intimately acquainted *intus et in cute* with the subjects of her pencil.

She published a volume on the Tuscan revolution, which was very favourably received. The *Examiner*, among other critics—all of them, to the best of my remembrance, more or less favourable—said of these *Letters* (for that was the form in which the work was published, all of them, I think, having been previously printed in the *Athenæum*), "Better political information than this book gives may be had in plenty; but it has a special value which we might almost represent by comparing it to the report of a very watchful nurse, who, without the physician's scientific knowledge, uses her own womanly instinct in observing every change of countenance and every movement indicating the return of health and strength to the patient. . . . . She has written a very vivid and truthful account." The critic has very accurately, and, it may be said, graphically, assigned its true value and character to the book.

I have found it necessary in a former chapter, where I have given a number of interesting and characteristic letters from Landor to my wife's father, to insert a deprecatory *caveat* against the exuberant enthusiasm of admiration which led him to talk of the probability of her eclipsing the names and fame of other poets, including in this estimate Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The preposterousness of this no human being would have felt more

strongly than Theodosia Garrow, except Theodosia Trollope, when such an estimate had become yet more preposterous. But Landor, whose unstinted admiration of Mrs. Browning's poetry is vigorously enough expressed in his own strong language, as may be seen in Mr. Forster's pages, would not have dreamed of instituting any such comparison at a later day. But that his critical acumen and judgment were not altogether destroyed by the enthusiasm of his friendship, is, I think, shown by the following little poem by Theodosia Trollope, written a few years after the birth of her child. I don't think I need apologise for printing it.

The original MS. of it before me gives no title; nor do I remember that the authoress ever assigned one to the verses.

I.

"In the noon-day's golden pleasance,
Little Bice, baby fair,
With a fresh and flowery presence,
Dances round her nurse's chair,
In the old grey loggia dances, haloed by her shining hair.

II.

"Pretty pearl in sober setting,
Where the arches garner shade!
Cones of maize like golden netting,
Fringe the sturdy colonnade,
And the lizards pertly pausing glance across the balustrade.

III.

" Brown cicala drily proses,
Creaking the hot air to sleep,
Bounteous orange flowers and roses,
Yield the wealth of love they keep,
To the sun's imperious ardour in a dream of fragrance deep.

IV.

" And a cypress, mystic hearted,
Cleaves the quiet dome of light
With its black green masses parted
But by gaps of blacker night,
Which the giddy moth and beetle circle round in dubious flight.

V.

" Here the well chain's pleasant clanging,
Sings of coolness deep below;
There the vine leaves breathless hanging,
Shine transfigured in the glow,
And the pillars stare in silence at the shadows which they throw.

VI.

" Portly nurse, black-browed, red-vested,
Knits and dozes, drowsed with heat;
Bice, like a wren gold-crested,
Chirps and teases round her seat,
Hides the needles, plucks the stocking, rolls the cotton o'er her feet.

VII.

"Nurse must fetch a draught of water,
In the glass with painted wings,[1]
Nurse must show her little daughter
All her tale of silver rings,
Dear sweet nurse must sing a couplet—solemn nurse, who *never* sings!

VIII.

"Blest Madonna! what a clamour!
Now the little torment tries,
Perched on tiptoe, all the glamour
Of her coaxing hands and eyes!
May she hold the glass she drinks from—just one moment, Bice cries.

IX.

"Nurse lifts high the Venice beaker,
Bossed with masks, and flecked with gold,
Scarce in time to 'scape the quicker
Little fingers over-bold,
Craving tendril-like to grasp it, with the will of four years old.

X.

"Pretty wood bird, pecking, flitting,
Round the cherries on the tree,
Ware the scarecrow, grimly sitting,
Crouched for silly things, like thee!
Nurse hath plenty such in ambush. 'Touch not, for it burns,'[2] quoth she.

[1] Those unacquainted with the forms of the old decorated Venetian glass will hardly understand the phrase in the text. Those who know them will feel the accuracy of the picture.

[2] "*Non toccare che brucia*," Tuscan proverb.

XI.

"And thine eyes' blue mirror widens
With an awestroke of belief;
Meekly following that blind guidance,
On thy finger's rosy sheaf,
Blow'st thou softly, fancy wounded, soothing down a painless grief.

XII.

"Nurse and nursling, learner, teacher,
Thus foreshadow things to come,
When the girl shall grow the creature
Of false terrors vain and dumb,
And entrust their baleful fetish with her being's scope and sum.

XIII.

"Then her heart shall shrink and wither,
Custom-straitened like her waist,
All her thought to cower together,
Huddling sheep-like with the rest,
With the flock of soulless bodies on a pattern schooled and laced.

XIV.

"Till the stream of years encrust her
With a numbing mail of stone,
Till her laugh lose half its lustre,
And her truth forswear its tone,
And she see God's might and mercy darkly through a glass alone!

XV.

"While our childhood fair and sacred,
Sapless doctrines doth rehearse,
And the milk of falsehoods acrid,
Burns our babe-lips like a curse,
Cling we must to godless prophets, as the suckling to the nurse.

XVI.

"As the seed time, so the reaping,
Shame on us who overreach,
While our eyes yet smart with weeping,
Hearts so all our own to teach,
Better they and we lay sleeping where the darkness hath no speech!"

It is impossible for any but those who know—not Florence, but—rural Tuscany well, to appreciate the really wonderful accuracy and picturesque perfection of the above scene from a Tuscan afternoon. But I think many others will feel the lines to be good. In the concluding stanzas, in which the writer draws her moral, there are weak lines. But in the first eleven, which paint her picture, there is not one. Every touch tells, and tells with admirable truth and vividness of presentation. In one copy of the lines which I have, the name is changed from Bice to "Flavia," and this, I take it, because of the entire non-applicability of the latter stanzas to the child, whose rearing was in her own hands. But the picture of child and nurse—how life-like none can tell, but I—was the picture of her

"baby Beatrice," and the description simply the reproduction of things seen.

I think I may venture to print also the following lines. They are, in my opinion, far from being equal in merit to the little poem printed above, but they are pretty, and I think sufficiently good to do no discredit to her memory. Like the preceding, they have no title.

I.

"I built me a temple, and said it should be
A shrine, and a home where the past meets me,
And the most evanescent and fleeting of things,
Should be lured to my temple, and shorn of their wings,
To adorn my palace of memories.

II.

"The pearl of the morning, the glow of the noon,
The play of the clouds as they float past the moon,
The most magical tint on the snowiest peak,
They are gone while I gaze, fade before you can speak,
Yet they stay in my palace of memories.

III.

"I stood in the midst of the forest trees,
And heard the sweet sigh of the wandering breeze,
And this with the tinkle of heifer bells,
As they trill on the ear from the dewy dells,
Are the sounds in my palace of memories.

IV.

"I looked in the face of a little child,
With its fugitive dimples and eyes so wild,
It springs off with a bound like a wild gazelle,
It is off and away, but I've caught my[1]
And here's mirth for my palace of memories.

V.

"In the morning we meet on a mountain height,
And we walk and converse till the fall of night,
We hold hands for a moment, then pass on our way,
But that which I've got from the friend of a day,
I'll keep in my palace of memories."

The verses which Landor praised with enthusiasm so excessive were most, or I think all of them, published in the annual edited by his friend Lady Blessington, and were all written before our marriage. I have many long letters addressed to her by that lady, and several by her niece Miss Power, respecting them. They always in every instance ask for "more."

Many of her verses she set to music, especially one little poemlet, which I remember to this day the tune of, which she called the *Song of the Blackbird*, and which was, if I remember rightly, made to consist wholly of the notes uttered by the bird.

[1] Word here illegible.

Another instance of her "multiform faculty" was her learning landscape sketching. I have spoken of her figure drawing. And this, I take it, was the real bent of her talent in that line. But unable to compass the likeness of a haystack myself, I was desirous of possessing some record of the many journeys which I designed to take, and eventually did take with her. And wholly to please me she forthwith made the attempt, and though her landscape was never equal to her figure drawing, I possess some couple of hundred of water-colour sketches done by her from nature on the spot.

I used to say that if I wanted a Sanscrit dictionary, I had only to put her head straight at it, and let her feel the spur, and it would have been done!

We lived together seventeen happy years. During the five first, I think I may say that she lived wholly and solely in, by, and for me. That she should live for somebody other than herself was an absolute indefeasible necessity of her nature. During the last twelve years I shared her heart with her daughter. Her intense worship for her "Baby Beatrice" was equalled only by—that of all the silliest and all the wisest women, who have true womanly hearts in their bosoms, for their children. The worship was, of course, all the more absorbing that the object of it was unique. I take it that, after the birth of her child, I came second in her heart. But I was not jealous of little Bice.

I do not think that she would have quite subscribed to the opinion of Garibaldi on the subject of the priesthood, which I mentioned in a former chapter—that they ought all to be forthwith put to death. But all her feelings and opinions were bitterly antagonistic to them. She was so deeply convinced of the magnitude of the evil inflicted by them and their Church on the character of the Italians, for whom she ever felt a great affection, that she was bitter on the subject. And it is the only subject on which I ever knew her to feel in any degree bitterly. Many of her verses written during her latter years are fiercely denunciatory or humorously satirical of the Italian priesthood, and especially of the Pontifical Government. I wish that my space permitted me to give further specimens of them here. But I must content myself with giving one line, which haunts my memory, and appears to me excessively happy in the accurate truthfulness of its simile. She is writing of the journey which Pius the Ninth made, and describing his equipment, says that he started "with strings of cheap blessings, like glass beads for savages."

With the exception of this strong sentiment my wife was one of the most tolerant people I ever knew. What she most avoided in those with whom she associated was, not so much ignorance, or even vulgarity of manner, as pure native stupidity. But even of that, when the need arose, she was tolerant. I never knew her in the selection of an

acquaintance, or even of a friend, to be influenced to the extent of even a hair's-breadth, by station, rank, wealth, fashion, or any consideration whatever, save personal liking and sympathy, which was, in her case, perfectly compatible with the widest divergence of views and opinions on nearly any of the great subjects which most divide mankind, and even with divergence of rules of conduct. Her own opinions were the honest results of original thinking, and her conduct the outcome of the dictates of her own heart—of her heart rather than of her reasoning powers, or of any code of law—a condition of mind which might be dangerous to individuals with less native purity of heart than hers.

As a wife, as a daughter, as a daughter-in-law, as a mother, she was absolutely irreproachable. In the first relationship she was all in all to me for seventeen years. She brought sweetness and light into my life and into my dwelling. She was the angel in the house, if ever human being was.

Her father became an inmate of our house after the death of his wife at a great age at Torquay, whither they had returned after the death of my wife's half-sister, Harriet Fisher. He was a jealously affectionate, but very exacting father; and few daughters, I think, could have been more admirable in her affection for him, her attention to him, her care of him. And I may very safely say that very few mothers of sons have the fortune of finding such a daughter-in-law. My mother had been very fond of her before our marriage, and became after-

wards as devotedly attached to her as she was to me, of whom she knew her to be an indivisible part, while she was to my mother simply perfect. Her own mother she had always been in the habit of calling by that name. She always spoke to and of my mother as "mammy." What she was to her own daughter I have already said. There was somewhat of the tendency towards "spoiling," which is mostly inseparable from the adoration which a young mother, of the right sort, feels for her first-born child, but she never made any attempt to avert or counteract my endeavours to prevent such spoiling. When little Bice had to be punished by solitary confinement for half an hour, she only watched anxiously for the expiration of the sentence.[1]

But that her worth, her talent, her social qualities, were recognised by a wider world than that of her own family, or her own circle of friends, is testified by the recording stone, which the Municipality placed on my house at the corner of the Piazza dell' Independenza, where it may still be seen. Indeed the honour was not undeserved. For during the whole of her residence in Italy, which nearly synchronised with the struggle of Italy for her independence and unity, she had adopted the Italian

[1] I do not remember that little Bice ever consoled herself under the disgrace of such captivity as my present wife has confessed to me that she did when suffering under the same condemnation. *Her* method of combining the maintenance of personal dignity with revenge on the oppressor, was to say to the first person who came to take her out of prison: "No! you can't come into *my* parlour!"

cause heart and soul, and done what was in her to do, for its advancement. The honour was rendered the more signal, and the more acceptable, from the fact that the same had recently been rendered by the same body to Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE house in the Piazzà dell' Independenza, which was known in the city as "Villino Trollope," and of which I have spoken at the close of the last chapter, was my property, and I had lived in it nearly the whole of my married life. During that time four deaths had occurred among its inmates.

The first to happen was that of the old and highly valued servant of whom I had occasion to speak when upon the subject of Mr. Hume's spiritualistic experiences at my house. She had been for many years a much trusted and beloved servant in the family of Mr. Garrow at Torquay, and had accompanied them abroad. Her name was Elizabeth Shinner. Her death was felt by all of us as that of a member of our family, and she lies in the Protestant cemetery at Florence by the side of her former master, and of the young mistress whom she had loved as a child of her own.

The next to go was Mr. Garrow. His death

was a very sudden and unexpected one. He was a robust and apparently perfectly healthy man. I was absent from home when he died. I had gone with a Cornishman, a Mr. Trewhella, who was desirous of visiting Mr. Sloane's copper mine, in the neighbourhood of Volterra, of which I have before spoken. We had accomplished our visit, and were returning over the Apennine about six o'clock in the morning in a little *bagherino*, as the country cart-gigs are called, when we were hailed by a man in a similar carriage meeting us, whom I recognised as the foreman of a carpenter we employed. He had been sent to find me, and bring me home with all speed, in consequence of the sudden illness of Mr. Garrow. As far as I could learn from him there was little probability of finding my father-in-law alive. I made the best of my way to Florence. But he had been dead several hours when I arrived. He had waked with a paralytic attack on him, which deprived him of the power of moving on the left side, and drawing his face awry, made speech almost impossible to him. He assured his servant—who was almost immediately with him—speaking with much difficulty, that it was nothing of any importance, and that he should soon get over it. But these were the last words he ever spoke, and in two or three hours afterwards he breathed his last.

Then in a few years more the *crescendo* wave of trouble took my mother from me at the age of eighty-three. For the last two or three years she

had entirely lost her memory, and for the last few months the use of her mental faculties. And she did not suffer much. The last words she uttered were "Poor Cecilia!"—her mind reverting in her latest moments to the child whose loss had been the most recent. She had for years entertained a great horror and dread of the possibility of being buried alive, in consequence of the very short time allowed by the law for a body to remain unburied after death; and she had exacted from me a promise that I would in any case cause a vein to be opened in her arm after death. In her case there could be no possible room for the shadow of doubt as to the certainty of death; but I was bound by my promise, and found some difficulty in the performance of it. The medical man in attendance, declaring the absolute absurdity of any doubt on the subject, refused to perform an operation which, he said, was wholly uncalled for, and argued that my promise could only be understood to apply to a case of possible doubt. I had none; but was none the less determined to be faithful to my promise. But it was not till I declared that I would myself sever a vein, in however butcher-like a manner, that I induced him to accompany me to the death-chamber and perform under my eyes the necessary operation.

My mother, the inseparable companion of so many wanderings in so many lands, the indefatigable labourer of so many years, found her rest near to the two who had gone from my house

before, in the beautiful little cemetery on which the Apennine looks down.

But it was not long before this sorrow was followed by a very much sorer one—by the worst of all that could have happened to me! After what I have written in the last chapter it is needless to say anything of the blank despair that fell upon me when my wife died, on the 13th of April, 1865. She also lies near the others.

My house was indeed left unto me desolate, and I thought that life and all its sweetness was over for me!

I immediately took measures for disposing of the house in the Piazza dell' Independenza, and before long found a purchaser for it. I had bought it when the speculator, who had become the owner of the ground at the corner of the space which was beginning to assume the semblance of a "square" or "piazza," had put in the foundations but had not proceeded much further with his work. I completed it, improving largely, as I thought, on his plan; adapted it for a single residence, instead of its division into sundry dwellings; obtained possession of additional ground between the house and the city wall, sufficient for a large garden; built around it, looking to the south, the largest and handsomest "stanzone"[1] for orange and lemon plants in Florence,

[1] "Stanzone" is the term used in Tuscany to signify the buildings destined to shelter the "Agrumi," as the orange and lemon plants are called generically, in the winter; which in Florence is too severe to permit of their being left in the open air.

and gathered together a collection of very fine trees, the profits from which (much smaller in my hands than would have been the case in those of a Florentine to the manner born) nevertheless abundantly sufficed to defray the expenses of the garden and gardeners. In a word, I made the place a very complete and comfortable residence. Nearly the whole of my first married life was spent in it. And much of the literary work of my life has been done in it.

I used in those days, and for very many years afterwards, to do all my writing standing; and I strongly recommend the practice to brother quill-drivers. Pauses, often considerable intervals, occur for thought while the pen is in the hand. And if one is seated at a table, one remains sitting during these intervals. But if one is standing, it becomes natural to one, during even a small pause, to take a turn up and down the room, or even, as I often used to do, in the garden. And such change and movement I consider eminently salutary both for mind and body.

I had specially contrived a little window immediately above the desk at which I stood, fixed to the wall. The room looking on the "loggia," which was the scene of the little poem transcribed in the preceding chapter, was abundantly lighted, but I liked some extra light close to my desk.

In that room my Bice was born. For it was subsequently to her birth that the destination of it was changed from a bedroom to a study.

Few men have passed years of more unchequered happiness than I did in that house. And I was very fond of it.

But, as may be readily imagined, it became all the more odious and intolerable to me when the "angel in the house" had been taken from me.

CHAPTER XX.

CONCLUSION.

ASSUREDLY it seemed to me that all was over; and the future a dead blank. And for a time I was as a man stunned.

But in truth it was very far otherwise! I was fifty-five; but I was in good health, young for my years, strong and vigorous in constitution, and before a year had passed it began to seem to me that a future, and life and its prospects, might open to me afresh; that the curtain might be dropped on the drama that was passed, and a new phase of life begun.

I had had, and vividly enjoyed an entire life, according to the measure that is meted out to many, perhaps I may say to most men. But I felt myself ready for another! And—thanks this time also to a woman—I have *had* another, *in no wise* less happy, in some respects, as less chequered by sorrows—more happy than the first! I am in better health too, having outgrown apparently

several of the maladies which young people are subject to!

Of this second life I am not now going to tell my readers anything. "What I remember" of my first life may be, and I hope has been, told frankly without giving offence or annoyance to any human being. I don't know that the telling of the story of my second life would necessarily lead me to say anything which could hurt anybody. But mixed up as its incidents and interests and associations have been with a great multitude of men and women still living and moving and talking and writing round about me, I should not feel myself so comfortably at liberty to write whatever offered itself to my memory.

Ten years hence, perhaps ("Please God, the public lives!" as a speculative showman said), I may tell the reader, if he cares to hear it, the story of my second life. For the present we will break off here.

But not without some words of parting kindness—and shall we say, wisdom!—from an old man to readers, most of whom probably might be his sons, and many doubtless his grandsons.

Especially, my young friends, don't pay overmuch attention to what the Psalmist says about "the years of man." I knew *dans le temps* a fine old octo-and-nearly-nonogenarian, one Gräberg de Hemsö, a Swede (a man with a singular history, who passed ten years of his early life in the British navy, and was, when I knew him, librarian at the Pitti Palace

in Florence), who used to complain of the Florentine doctors that "Dey doosen't know what de nordern constitooshions is!" and I take it the same may be said of the Psalmist. The years beyond three score and ten need not be all sorrow and trouble. Depend upon it kindly nature—*prudens*, as that jolly fellow, fine gentleman, and true philosopher, Horace, says in a similar connection—kindly nature knows how to make the closing decade of life every whit as delightful as any of the preceding, if only you don't baulk her purposes. Don't weigh down your souls, and pin your particles of divine essence to earth by your yesterday's vices; be sure that when you cannot jump over the chairs so featly as you can now, you will not want to do so; tell the girls with genial old Anacreon, when the time comes, that whether the hairs on your forehead be many or few, you know not, but do know well that it behoves an old man to be cheery in proportion to the propinquity of his exit, and go on your way rejoicing through this beautiful world, which not even the Radicals have quite spoilt yet.

And so *à rivederci—au revoir—auf Wiedersehn*—why have we no English equivalent better than "Here's to our next pleasant meeting!"

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